D'ROZARIO AND CO.'S

SCHOLASTIC COURSE

EDITED BY

CHARLES JEFFS MONTAGUE.

No. 3.

CALCUTTA:
P. S. D'ROZARIO AND CO. TANK-SQUARE.

1851

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PUISNE JUDGE OF THE SUPREME COURT
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AS A SMALL TOKEN OF GRATITUDE.

BY

THE EDITOR.

PREFACE.

The publication of a Series of Scholastic works is a novelty in Bengal. The Calcutta School Book Society have issued Scholastic publications, but these have not been *serial*. The books have not been *gradationally* prepared, from simple to difficult lessons. It is with the view of supplying a deficiency which has long been felt in this land, that Messrs. D'Rozario & Co. have engaged to publish a series of school-books. The success of the three numbers of the Reading Course will be a sufficient test of this enterprise, by affording the means of judging whether it is to be continued or to be abandoned.

How far this Number may be found to fulfil the object of the publishers, it is not for the Editor to determine. To attain success at once is rarely the fortunate lot of men; nor does the Editor think that he has reached that point. To be however the first in a great and glorious work is not without honor.

The *third* Number has preceded the *first*. As the former is intended for the more advanced pupils of our Schools, it is published to pave the way for the introduction of the first and second numbers.

Moreover, the want of prose writings has been felt by almost every teacher in this country. We have an excellent compilation of poetical writings from the sound and discerning sense of Captain D. L. Richardson. But we have no prose compilation on a similar plan. The books now generally adopted, are Bacon's Essays, Advancement of Learning, and Novum Organon. But it is almost impossible for boys who are not further advanced than reading the fourth number of the English Reader published by the Calcutta School Book Society to understand Bacon's writings. The difficulties to be met with in them are insuperable to such students. An intermediate work was required; and this *third* Number of Messrs. D'Rozario and Co.'s Scholastic Course is intended to supply the desideratum.

Besides, the Essays of Dr. Johnson and Addison are so highly appreciated, that an acquaintance with them is most necessary for our youths.

I regret that the size of this Number, which

has swelled to more than 700 pages, has obliged the Editor to omit the Essays on Wit and the Character of Sir Roger De Coverley, with a few others on general topics. These may, however, be inserted in another Edition of this Number, if one be called for.

The first and second Numbers will speedily follow.

C. J. MONTAGUE.

80, *Dhurrumtollah*,
January, 1851.

D'ROZARIO AND CO.'S

SCHOLASTIC COURSE.

ENGLISH READING.

No. III.

HOMER is universally allowed to have had the greatest Invention of any writer whatever. The praise of judgment Virgil has justly contested with him, and others may have their pretensions as to particular excellences; but his invention remains yet unrivalled. Nor is it a wonder if he has ever been acknowledged the greatest of poets, who most excelled in that which is the very foundation of poetry. It is the Invention that in different degrees distinguishes all great geniuses: the utmost stretch of human study, learning, and industry, which masters every thing besides, can never attain to this. It furnishes Art with all her materials, and without it Judgment itself can at best but steal wisely; for Art is only like a prudent steward, that lives on managing the riches of Nature. Whatever praises may be given to works of Judgment, there is not even a single beauty in them to which the Invention must not contribute: as in the most regular gardens, Art can only reduce the beauties of Nature to more regularity, and such a figure, which

to have taken in the whole circle of arts, and the whole compass of nature, to supply his maxims and reflections; all the inward passions and affections of mankind, to furnish his characters; and all the outward forms and images of things for his descriptions; but, wanting yet an ampler sphere to expatiate in, he opened a new and boundless walk for his imagination, and created a world for himself in the invention of fable. That which Aristotle calls 'the soul of poetry,' was first breathed into it by Homer. I shall begin with considering him in this part, as it is naturally the first; and I speak of it both as it means the design of a poem, and as it is taken for fiction.

Fable may be divided into the Probable, the Allegorical, and the Marvellous. The Probable Fable is the recital of such actions as, though they did not happen, yet might, in the common course of nature; or of such as, though they did, become fables, by the additional episodes and manner of telling them. Of this sort is the main story of an Epic poem, the return of Ulysses, the settlement of the Trojans in Italy, or the like. That of the Iliad is the anger of Achilles, the most short and single subject that ever was chosen by any poet. Yet this he has supplied with a vaster variety of incidents and events, and crowded with a greater number of councils, speeches, battles, and episodes of all kinds, than are to be found even in those poems whose schemes are of the utmost latitude and irregularity. The action is hurried on with the most vehement spirit, and its whole duration employs not so much as fifty days. Virgil, for the want of a warmth genius, aided himself by taking

in a more extensive subject, as well as a greater length of time, and contracting the design of both Homer's poems into one, which is yet but a fourth part as large as his. The other Epic poets have used the same practice, but generally carried it so far as to superinduce a multiplicity of fables, destroy the unity of action, and lose their readers in an unreasonable length of time. Nor is it only in the main design that they have been unable to add to his invention, but they have followed him in every episode and part of the story. If he has given a regular catalogue of an army, they all draw up their forces in the same order. If he has funeral games of Patroclus, Virgil has the same for Anchises; and Statius (rather than omit them) destroys the unity of his action for those of Archemorus. If Ulysses visit the shades, the Æneas of Virgil, and Scipio of Silius, are sent after him. If he be detained from his return by the allurements of Calypso, so is Æneas by Dido, and Rinaldo by Armida. If Achilles be absent from the army on the score of a quarrel through half the poem, Rinaldo must absent himself just as long, on the like account. If he gives his hero a suit of celestial armour, Virgil and Tasso make the same present to theirs. Virgil has not only observed this close imitation of Homer, but, where he had not led the way, supplied the want from other Greek authors. Thus the story of Sinon and the taking of Troy was copied (says Macrobius) almost word for word from Pisander, as the loves of Dido and Æneas are taken from those of Medea and Jason in Apollonius and several others in the same manner.

To proceed to the Allegorical Fable: if we reflect

upon those innumerable knowledges, those secrets of nature and physical philosophy, which Homer is generally supposed to have wrapped up in his allegories, what a new and ample scene of wonder may this consideration afford us! how fertile will that imagination appear, which was able to clothe all the properties of elements, the qualifications of the mind, the virtues and vices, in forms and persons; and to introduce them into actions agreeable to the nature of the things they shadowed! This is a field in which no succeeding poets could dispute with Homer; and whatever commendations have been allowed them on this head, are by no means for their invention in having enlarged his circle, but for their judgment in having contracted it. For when the mode of learning changed in the following ages, and science was delivered in a plainer manner, it then became as reasonable in the more modern poets to lay it aside, as it was in Homer to make use of it. And perhaps it was no unhappy circumstance for Virgil, that there was not in his time that demand upon him of so great an invention, as might be capable of furnishing all those allegorical parts of a poem.

The Marvellous Fable includes whatever is supernatural, and especially the machines of the gods. He seems the first who brought them into a system of machinery for poetry, and such a one as makes its greatest importance and dignity. For we find those authors, who have been offended at the literal notion of the gods, constantly laying their accusation against Homer as the chief support of it. But whatever cause there might be to blame his machines in a philosophical or a religious view, they

re so perfect in the poetic, that mankind have een ever since contented to follow them: none ave been able to enlarge the sphere of poetry eyond the limits he has set; every attempt of this nature has proved unsuccessful; and, after all the various changes of times and religions, his gods continue to this day the gods of poetry.

We come now to the characters of his persons; and here we shall find no author has ever drawn so many, with so visible and surprising a variety, or given us such lively and affecting impressions of them. Every one has something so singularly his own, that no painter could have distinguished them more by their features than the Poet has by their manners. Nothing can be more exact than the distinctions he has observed in the different degrees of virtues and vices. The single quality of courage is wonderfully diversified in the several characters of the Iliad. That of Achilles is furious and untractable; that of Diomede forward, yet listening to advice and subject to command; that of Ajax is heavy and self-confiding; of Hector active and vigilant: the courage of Agamemnon is inspirited by love of empire and ambition; that of Menelaus mixed with softness and tenderness for his people: we find in Idomeneus a plain direct soldier, in Sarpedon a gallant and generous one. Nor is this judicious and astonishing diversity to be found only in the principal quality which constitues the main of each character, but even in the under-parts of it, to which he takes care to give a tincture of that principal one. For example, the main character of Ulysses and Nestor consist in wisdom; and they are distinct in this, that the wisdom of one is artificial

and various, of the other, natural, open, and regular. But they have, besides, characters of courage; and this quality also takes a different turn in each from the difference of this prudence: for one in the war depends still upon caution, the other upon experience. It would be endless to produce instances of these kinds. The characters of Virgil are far from striking us in this open manner; they lie in a great degree hidden and undistinguished, and where they are marked most evidently, affect us not in proportion to those of Homer. His characters of valour are much alike; even that of Turnus seems no way peculiar, but as it is in a superior degree; and we see nothing that differences the courage of Mnestheus from that of Sergestus, Cloanthus, or the rest. In like manner it may be remarked of Statius's heroes, that an air of impetuosity runs through them all: the same horrid and savage courage appears in his Capaneus, Tydeus, Hippomedon, &c. They have a parity of character, which makes them seem brothers of one family. I believe when the reader is led into this track of reflection, if he will pursue it through the Epic and Tragic writers, he will be convinced how infinitely superior in this point the invention of Homer was to that of all others.

The speeches are to be considered as they flow from the characters, being perfect or defective as they agree or disagree with the manners of those who utter them. As there is more variety of characters in the Iliad, so there is of speeches, than in any other poem. "Every thing in it has manners," (as Aristotle expresses it); that is every thing is acted or spoken. It is hardly credible, in a work of such length, how small a number of lines are

mployed in narration. In Virgil, the dramatic art is less in proportion to the narrative; and the peeches often consist of general reflections or houghts, which might be equally just in any person's mouth upon the same occasion. As many of his persons have no apparent characters, so many of his speeches escape being applied and judged by the rule of propriety. We oftener think of the author himself when we read Virgil, than when we are engaged in Homer: all which are the effects of a colder invention, that interests us less in the action described: Homer makes us hearers, and Virgil leaves us readers.

If in the next place we take a view of the sentiments, the same presiding faculty is eminent in the sublimity and spirit of his thoughts. Longinus has given his opinion, that it was in this part Homer principally excelled. What were alone sufficient to prove the grandeur and excellence of his sentiments in general, is, that they have so remarkable a parity with those of the Scripture: Dupori, in his Gnomologia Homerica, has collected innumerable instances of this sort. And it is with justice, an excellent modern writer allows, that if Virgil has not so many thoughts that are low and vulgar, he has not so many that are sublime and noble; and that the Roman author seldom rises into very astonishing sentiments, where he is not fired by the Iliad.

If we observe his descriptions, images, and similes, we shall find the invention still predominant. To what else can we ascribe that vast comprehension of images of every sort, where we see each circumstance of art, and individual of nature, summoned together, by the extent and fecundity of his

imagination; to which all things, in their various views, presented themselves in an instant, and had their impressions taken off to perfection at a heat? Nay, he not only gives us the full prospects of things, but several unexpected peculiarities and side views, unobserved by any painter but Homer. Nothing is so surprising as the descriptions of his battles, which take up no less than half the Iliad, and are supplied with so vast a variety of incidents, that no one bears a likeness to another; such different kinds of deaths, that no two heroes are wounded in the same manner; and such a profusion of noble ideas, that every battle rises above the last in greatness, horror, and confusion. It is certain, there is not near that number of images and descriptions in any Epic poet; though every one has assisted himself with a great quantity out of him: and it is evident of Virgil especially, that he has scarce any comparisons, which are not drawn from his master.

If we descend from hence to the expression, we see the bright imagination of Homer shining out in the most enlivened forms of it. We acknowledge him the father of poetical diction, the first who taught that language of the gods to men. His expression is like the colouring of some great masters, which discovers itself to be laid on boldly, and executed with rapidity. It is indeed the strongest and most glowing imaginable, and touched with the greatest spirit. Aristotle had reason to say, He was the only poet who had found out living words; there are in him more daring figures and metaphors than in any good author whatever. An arrow is impatient to be on the wing, a weapon thirsts to

drink the blood of an enemy, and the like. Yet his expression is never too big for the sense, but justly great in proportion to it. It is the sentiment that swells and fills out the diction, which rises with it, and forms itself about it; for in the same degree that a thought is warmer, an expression will be brighter; as that is more strong, this will become more perspicuous: like glass in the furnace, which grows to a greater magnitude, and refines to a greater clearness, only as the breath within is more powerful, and the heat more intense.

To throw his language more out of prose, Homer seems to have affected the compound epithets. This was a sort of composition peculiarly proper to poetry, not only as it heightened the diction, but as it assisted and filled the numbers with greater sound and pomp, and likewise conduced in some measure to thicken the images. On this last consideration I cannot but attribute these also to the fruitfulness of his invention, since (as he has managed them) they are a sort of supernumerary pictures of the person or things to which they are joined. We see the notion of Hector's plumes in the epithet κορυθαίολος,* the landscape of Mount Neritus in that of εἰνοσίφυλλος,† and so of others; which particular images could not have been insisted upon so long as to express them in a description (though but of a single line), without diverting the reader too much from the principal action or figure. As a metaphor is a short simile, one of these epithets is a short description.

Lastly, if we consider his versification, we shall be

*. Having a variegated or glittering helmet—always applied by Homer to Hector.

† Shaking its leaves.

sensible what a share of praise is due to his invention in that. He was not satisfied with his language as he found it settled in any one part of Greece, but searched through its different dialects with this particular view, to beautify and perfect his numbers: he considered these as they had a greater mixture of vowels or consonants, and accordingly employed them as the verse required either a greater smoothness or strength. What he most affected was the Ionic, which has a peculiar sweetness from its never using contractions, and from its custom of resolving the diphthong into two syllables, so as to make the words open themselves with a more spreading and sonorous fluency. With this he mingled the Attic contractions, the broader Doric, and the feebler Æolic, which after rejects its aspirate, or takes off its accent; and completed this variety by altering some letters with the license of poetry. Thus his measures, instead of being fetters to his sense, were always in readiness to run along with the warmth of his rapture, and even to give a farther representation of his notions, in the correspondence of their sounds to what they signified. Out of all these he has derived that harmony, which makes us confess he had not only the richest head, but the finest ear in the world. This is so great a truth, that whoever will but consult the tune of his verses, even without understanding them (with the same sort of diligence, as we daily see practised in the case of Italian operas), will find more sweetness, variety, and majesty of sound than in any other language or poetry. The beauty of his numbers is allowed by the critics to be copied but faintly by Virgil himself, though they are just to ascribe it to the nature of the

Latin tongue: indeed, the Greek has some advantages, both from the natural sound of its words, and the turn and cadence of its verse, which agree with the genius of no other language. Virgil was very sensible of this, and used the utmost diligence in working up a more intractable language to whatsoever graces it was capable of; and in particular never failed to bring the sound of his line to a beautiful agreement with its sense. If the Grecian poet has not been so frequently celebrated on this account as the Roman, the only reason is, that fewer critics have understood one language than the other. Dionysius of Halicarnassus has pointed out many of our Author's beauties in this kind, in his treatise of the Composition of Words. It suffices at present to observe of his numbers, that they flow with so much ease, as to make one imagine that Homer had no other care than to transcribe as fast as the Muses dictated: and at the same time with so much force and inspiriting vigour, that they awaken and raise us like the sound of a trumpet. They roll along as a plentiful river, always in motion, and always full; while we are borne away by a tide of verse, the most rapid, and yet the most smooth imaginable.

Thus on whatever side we contemplate Homer, what principally strikes us is his Invention. It is that which forms the character of each part of his work; and accordingly we find it to have made his fable more extensive and copious than any other; his manners more lively and strongly marked, his speeches more affecting and transported, his sentiments more warm and sublime, his images and descriptions more full and animated, his expression more raised and daring, and his numbers more rapid

and various. I hope, in what has been said of Virgil with regard to any of these heads, I have no way derogated from his character. Nothing is more absurd or endless, than the common method of comparing eminent writers by an opposition of particular passages in them, and forming a judgment from thence of their merit upon the whole. We ought to have a certain knowledge of the principal character and distinguishing excellence of each; it is in that we are to consider him, and in proportion to his degree in that we are to admire him. No author or man ever excelled the world in more than one faculty; and as Homer has done this in invention, Virgil has in judgment. Not that we are to think that Homer wanted judgment, because Virgil had it in a more eminent degree; or that Virgil wanted invention, because Homer possessed a larger share of it: each of these great authors had more of both than perhaps any man besides, and are only said to have less in comparison with one another. Homer was the greater genius, Virgil the better artist. In one we most admire the man, in the other the work; Homer hurries and transports us with a commanding impetuosity, Virgil leads us with an attractive majesty; Homer scatters with a generous profusion, Virgil bestows with a careful magnificence; Homer, like the Nile, pours out his riches with a boundless overflow, Virgil, like a river in its banks, with a gentle and constant stream. When we behold their battles, methinks the two poets resemble the heroes they celebrate: Homer, boundless and irresistible, as Achilles, bears all before him, and shines more

and more as the tumult increases: Virgil, calmly daring like Æneas, appears undisturbed in the midst of the action; disposes all about him, and conquers with tranquillity. And when we look upon their machines, Homer seems like his own Jupiter in his terrors shaking Olympus, scattering the lightnings, and firing the heavens; Virgil, like the same power in his benevolence, counselling the gods, laying plans for empires, and regularly ordering his whole creation.

But after all, it is with great parts as with great virtues they naturally border on some imperfection: and it is often hard to distinguish exactly where the virtue ends or the fault begins. As prudence may sometimes sink to suspicion, so may a great judgment decline to coldness; and as magnanimity may run up to profusion or extravagance, so may a great invention to redundancy or wildness. If we look upon Homer in this view we shall perceive the chief objections against him to proceed from so noble a cause as the excess of this faculty.

Among these we may reckon some of his marvelous Fictions, upon which so much criticism has been spent, as surpassing all the bounds of probability. Perhaps it my be with great and superior souls as with gigantic bodies, which, exerting themselves with unusual strength, exceed what is commonly thought the due proportion of parts, to become miracles in the whole; and like the old heroes of that make, commit something near extravagance, amidst a series of glorious and inimitable performances. Thus Homer has his speaking horses, and Virgil his myrtles dis-

tilling blood, where the latter has not so much as contrived the easy intervention of a deity to save the probability.

It is owing to the same vast invention that his similes have been thought too exuberant and full of circumstances. The force of this faculty is seen in nothing more than in its inability to confine itself to that single circumstance upon which the comparison is grounded; it runs out into embellishments or additional images, which, however, are so managed as not to overpower the main one. His similes are like pictures, where the principal figure has not only its proportion given agreeable to the original, but is also set off with occasional ornaments and prospects. The same will account for his manner of heaping a number of comparisons together in one breath, when his fancy suggested to him at once so many various and correspondent images. The reader will easily extend this observation to more objections of the same kind.

If there are others which seem rather to charge him with a defect or narrowness of genius, than an excess of it, those seeming defects will be found upon examination to proceed wholly from the nature of the times he lived in. Such are his grosser representations of the gods, and the vicious and imperfect manner of his heroes. But I must here speak a word of the latter, as it is a point generally carried into extremes, both by the censurers and defenders of Homer. It must be a strange partiality to antiquity, to think with Madame Dacier, 'that those times and manners are so much the more excellent, as they are more

contrary to ours.'* Who can be so prejudiced in their favour as to magnify the felicity of those ages, when a spirit of revenge and cruelty, joined with the practice of rapine and robbery, reigned through the world; when no mercy was shown, but for the sake of lucre, when the greatest princes were put to the sword, and their wives and daughters made slaves and concubines? On the other side, I would not be so delicate as those modern critics, who are shocked at the servile offices and mean employment in which we sometimes see the heroes of Homer engaged. There is a pleasure in taking a view of that simplicity in opposition to the luxury of succeeding ages, in beholding monarchs without their guards, princes tending their flocks, and princesses drawing water from the springs. When we read Homer, we ought to reflect that we are reading the most ancient author in the heathen world; and those who consider him in this light, will double their pleasure in the perusal of him. Let them think they are growing acquainted with nations and people that are now no more; that they are stepping almost three thousand years back into the remotest antiquity, and entertaining themselves with a clear and surprising vision of things no where else to be found, the only true mirror of that ancient world. By this means alone their greatest obstacles will vanish; and what usually creates their dislike will become a satisfaction.

This consideration may further serve to an-

* Preface to his Homer.

swer for the constant use of the same epithets to his gods and heroes; such as the far-darting Phœbus, the blue-eyed Pallas, the swift-footed Achilles, &c. which some have censured as impertinent and tediously repeated. Those of the gods depended upon the powers and offices then believed to belong to them, and had contracted a weight and veneration from the rites and solemn devotions in which they were used: they were a sort of attributes with which it was a matter of religion to salute them on all occasions, and which it was an irreverence to omit. As for the epithets of great men, Mons Boileau is of opinion, that they were in the nature of surnames, and repeated as such; for the Greeks having no names derived from their fathers, were obliged to add some other distinction of each person; either naming his parents expressly, or his place of birth, profession, or the like: as Alexander, the son of Philip, Herodotus of Halicarnassus, Diogenes the Cynic, &c. Homer therefore, complying with the custom of his country, used such distinctive additions as better agreed with poetry. And indeed we have something parallel to these in modern times, such as the names of Harold Harefoot, Edmond Ironside, Edward Longshanks, Edward the Black Prince, &c. If yet this be thought to account better for the propriety than for the repetition, I shall add a farther conjecture. Hesiod, dividing the world into its different ages, has placed a fourth age between the brazen and the iron one, of Heroes distinct from other men; a divine race, who fought at Thebes and Troy, are called demi-gods, and lived by the care of

Jupiter in the islands of the blessed.'* Now among the divine honours, which were paid them they might have this also in common with the gods, not to be mentioned without the solemnity of an epithet, and such as might be acceptable to them by its celebrating their families, actions, or qualities.

What other cavils have been raised against Homer are such as hardly deserve a reply, but will yet be taken notice of as they occur in the course of the work. Many have been occasioned by an injudicious endeavour to exalt Virgil; which is much the same, as if one should think to raise the superstructure by undermining the foundation: one would imagine, by the whole course of their parallels, that these critics never so much as heard of Homer's having written first; a consideration which whoever compares these two poets, ought to have always in his eye. Some accuse him for the same things which they overlook or praise in the other; as when they prefer the fable and moral of the Æneis to those of the Iliad, for the same reasons which might set the Odysseys above the Æneis: as that the hero is a wiser man; and the action of the one more beneficial to his country than that of the other: or else they blame him for not doing what he never designed; as because Achilles is not as good and perfect a prince as Æneas, when the very moral of his poem required a contrary character: it is thus that Rapin judges in his comparsion of Homer and Virgil. Others select

* Hesiod. lib. i. ver. 155. &c.

those particular passages of Homer, which are not so laboured as some that Virgil drew out of them: this is the whole management of Scaliger in his Poetics. Others quarrel with what they take for low and mean expressions, sometimes through a false delicacy and refinement, oftener from an ignorance of the graces of the original; and then triumph in the awkwardness of their own translation: this is the conduct of Perault in his Parallels. Lastly, there are others, who, pretending to a fairer proceeding, distinguish between the personal merit of Homer, and that of his work; but when they come to assign the causes of the great reputation of the Iliad, they found it upon the ignorance of his times and the prejudice of those that followed: and in pursuance of this principle, they make those accidents (such as the contention of the cities, &c.) to be the causes of his fame, which were in reality the consequences of his merit. The same might as well be said of Virgil, or any great author, whose general character will infallibly raise many casual additions to their reputation. This is the method of Mons. de la Motte, who yet confesses upon the whole, that in whatever age Homer had lived, he must have been the greatest poet of his nation, and that he may be said in this sense to be the master even of those who surpassed him.

In all these objections we see nothing that contradicts his title to the honour of the chief invention; and as long as this (which is indeed the characteristic of poetry itself) remains uncontradicted by his followers, he still continues superior to them. A cooler judgment may commit

fewer faults, and be approved in the eyes of one sort of critics; but that warmth of fancy will carry the loudest and most universal applauses, which holds the heart of a reader under the strongest enchantment. Homer not only appears the inventor of poetry but excels all the inventors of other arts in this, that he has swallowed up the honour of those who succeeded him. What he has done admitted no increase, it only left room for contraction or regulation. He showed all the stretch of fancy at once; and if he has failed in some of his flights, it was but because he attempted every thing. A work of this kind seems like a mighty tree, which rises from the most vigorous seed, is improved with industry, flourishes and produces the finest fruit; nature and art conspire to raise it; pleasure and profit join to make it valuable; and they, who find the justest faults, have only said, that a few branches (which run luxuriant through a richness of nature) might be lopped into form, to give it a more regular appearance.

Having now spoken of the beauties and defects of the original, it remains to treat of the translation, with the same view to the chief characteristic. As far as that is seen in the main parts of the poem, such as the fable, manners, and sentiment, no translator can prejudice it but by wilful omissions or contractions. As it also breaks out in every particular image, description, and simile; whoever lessens or too much softens those, takes off from this chief character. It is the first grand duty of an interpreter, to give his author entire and unmaimed; and for

the rest, the diction and versification only are his proper province; since these must be his own, but the others he is to take as he finds them.

It should then be considered what methods may afford some equivalent in our language for the graces of these in the Greek. It is certain no literal translation can be just to an excellent original in a superior language; but it is a great mistake to imagine (as many have done), that a rash paraphrase can make amends for this general defect; which is no less in danger to lose the spirit of an ancient, by deviating into the modern manners of expression. If there be sometimes a darkness, there is often a light in antiquity, which nothing better preserves than a version almost literal. I know no liberties one ought to take, but those which are necessary for transfusing the spirit of the original, and supporting the poetical style of the translation; and I will venture to say, there have not been more men misled in former times by a servile dull adherence to the letter, than have been deluded in ours by a chimerical and insolent hope of raising and improving their author. It is not to be doubted, that the fire of the poem is what a translator should principally regard, as it is most likely to expire in his managing: however, it is his safest way to be content with preserving this to his utmost in the whole, without endeavouring to be more than he finds his author is, in any particular place. It is a great secret in writing to know when to be plain, and when poetical and figurative; and it is what Homer will teach us, if we will but follow modestly in his foot-

steps. Where his diction is bold and lofty, let us raise ours as high as we can; but where his is plain and humble, we ought not to be deterred from imitating him by the fear of incurring the censure of a mere English critic. Nothing that belongs to Homer seems to have been more commonly mistaken than the just pitch of his style; some of his translators having swelled into fustian in a proud confidence of the sublime, others sunk into flatness in a cold and timorous notion of simplicity. Methinks I see these different followers of Homer, some sweating and straining after him by violent leaps and bounds (the certain signs of false mettle); others slowly and servilely creeping in his train, while the Poet himself is all the time proceeding with an unaffected and equal majesty before them. However, of the two extremes one could sooner pardon frenzy than frigidity: no author is to be envied for such commendations as he may gain by that character of style, which his friends must agree together to call simplicity, and the rest of the world will call dulness. There is a graceful and dignified simplicity, as well as a bald and sordid one, which differ as much from each other as the air of a plain man from that of a sloven: it is one thing to be tricked up, and another not to be dressed at all. Simplicity is the mean between ostentation and rusticity.

This pure and noble simplicity is no where in such prefection as in the Scripture and our author. One may affirm, with all respect to the inspired writings, that the Divine Spirit made use of no other words but what were intelligible and com-

mon to men at that time, and in that part of the world: and as Homer is the author nearest to those, his style must of course bear a greater resemblance to the sacred books than that of any other writer. This consideration (together with what has been observed of the parity of some of his thoughts) may, methinks, induce a translator on the one hand to give into several of those general phrases and manners of expression, which have attained a veneration even in our language from being used in the Old Testament; as on the other, to avoid those which have been appropriated to the Divinity, and in a manner consigned to mystery and religion.

For a farther preservation of this air of simplicity, a particular care should be taken to express with all plainness those moral sentences and proverbial speeches which are so numerous in this poet. They have something venerable, and as I may say oracular, in that unadorned gravity and shortness with which they are delivered: a grace which would be utterly lost by endeavouring to give them what we call a more ingenious (that is, a more modern) turn in the paraphrase.

Perhaps the mixture of some Græcisms and old words, after the manner of Milton, if done without too much affectation, might not have an ill effect in a version of this particular work, which most of any other seems to require a venerable antique cast. But certainly the use of modern terms of war and government, such as platoon, campaign, junto, or the like (into which some of his translators have fallen) cannot be allowable: those only excepted, without which it

is impossible to treat the subjects in any living language.

There are two pecularities in Homer's diction, which are a sort of marks, or moles, by which every common eye distinguishes him at first sight: those who are not his greatest admirers look upon them as defects, and those who are, seem pleased with them as beauties. I speak of his compound epithets and of his repetitions. Many of the former cannot be done literally into English without destroying the purity of our language. I believe such should be retained as slide easily of themselves into an English compound, without violence to the ear or to the received rules of composition; as well as those which have received sanction from the authority of our best poets, and are become familiar through their use of them; such as the cloud-compelling Jove, &c. As for the rest, whenever any can be as fully and significantly expressed in a single word as in a compound one, the course to be taken is obvious.

Some that cannot be so turned as to preserve their full image by one or two words, may have justice done them by circumlocution; as the epithet σειπύλλος to a mountain, which would appear little or ridiculous translated literally 'leaf-shaking;' but which affords a majestic idea in the periphrasis: 'the lofty mountain shakes his waving woods.' Others that admit of differing significations, may receive an advantage by a judicious variation, according to the occasions on which they are introduced. For example, the epithet of Apollo, ἑκηβόλος, or 'far-shooting;' is capable of two explications; one literal, in respect of the darts and

bow, the ensigns of that god; the other allegorical, with regard to the rays of the sun; therefore in such places where Apollo is represented as a god in person, I would use the former interpretation; and where the effects of the sun are described, I would make choice of the latter. Upon the whole, it will be necessary to avoid that perpetual repetition of the same epithets which we find in Homer; and which, though it might be accommodated (as has been already shown) to the ear of those times, is by no means so to ours; but one may wait for opportunities of placing them, where they derive an additional beauty from the occasions on which they are employed; and in doing this properly, a translator may at once show his fancy and his judgment.

As for Homer's repetitions, we may divide them into three sorts; of whole narrations and speeches, of single sentences, and of one verse or hemistich. I hope it is not impossible to have such a regard to these, as neither to lose so known a mark of the Author on the one hand, nor to offend the reader too much on the other. The repetition is not ungraceful in those speeches where the dignity of the speaker renders it a sort of insolence to alter his words; as in the messages from gods to men, or from higher powers to inferiors in concerns of state, or where the ceremonial of religion seems to require it, in the solemn forms of prayers, oaths, or the like. In other cases, I believe the best rule is to be guided by the nearness or distance, at which the repetitions are placed in the original: when they follow too close, one may vary the expression; but it is a ques-

tion whether a professed translator be authorized to omit any: if they be tedious the author is to answer for it.

It only remains to speak of the Versification. Homer (as has been said) is perpetually applying the sound to the sense, and varying it on every new subject. This is indeed one of the most exquisite beauties of poetry, and attainable by very few: I know only of Homer eminent for it in the Greek, and Virgil in Latin. I am sensible it is what may sometimes happen by chance, when a writer is warm, and fully possessed of his image: however, it may be reasonably believed they designed this, in whose verse it so manifestly appears in a superior degree to all others. Few readers have the ear to be judges of it; but those who have, will see I have endeavoured at this beauty.

Upon the whole, I must confess myself utterly incapable of doing justice to Homer. I attempt him in no other hope than that which one may entertain without much vanity, of giving a more tolerable copy of him than any entire translation in verse has yet done. We have only those of Chapman, Hobbes, and Ogilby. Chapman has taken the advantage of an immeasurable length of verse, notwithstanding which, there is scarce any paraphrase more loose and rambling than his. He has frequent interpolations of four or six lines, and I remember one in the thirteenth book of the Odyssey, ver. 312, where he has spun twenty verses out of two. He is often mistaken in so bold a manner, that one might think he deviated on purpose, if he did not in other places

of his notes insist so much upon verbal trifle. He appears to have had a strong affectation of extracting new meanings out of his author, insomuch as to promise, in his rhyming preface, a poem of the mysteries he had revealed in Homer: and perhaps he endeavoured to strain the obvious sense to this end. His expression is involved in fustian, a fault for which he was remarkable in his original writings, as in the tragedy of Bussy d'Amboise, &c. In a word, the nature of the man may account for his whole performance: for he appears, from his preface and remarks, to have been of an arrogant turn, and an enthusiast in poetry. His own boast of having finished half the Iliad in less than fifteen weeks shows, with what negligence his version was performed. But that which is to be allowed him, and which very much contributed to cover his defects, is a daring fiery spirit that animates his translation, which is something like what one might imagine Homer himself would have writ before he arrived at years of discretion.

Hobbes has given us a correct explanation of the sense in general; but for particulars and circumstances he continually lops them, and often omits the most beautiful. As for its being esteemed a close translation, I doubt not many have been led into that error by the shortness of it, which proceeds not from his following the original, line by line, but from the contractions above mentioned. He sometimes omits whole similes and sentences, and is now and then guilty of mistakes into which no writer of his learning could have fallen, but through carelessness. His

poetry, as well as Ogilby's, is too mean for criticism.

It is a great loss to the poetical world, that Mr. Dryden did not live to translate the Iliad. He has left us only the first book, and a small part of the sixth: in which if he has in some places not truly interpreted the sense, or preserved the antiquities, it ought to be excused on account of the haste he was obliged to write in. He seems to have had too much regard to Chapman, whose words he sometimes copies, and has unhappily followed him in passages where he wanders from the orignal. However, had he translated the whole work, I would no more have attempted Homer after him than Virgil, his version of whom (notwithstanding some human errors) is the most noble and spirited translation I know in any language. But the fate of great geniuses is like that of great ministers; though they are confessedly the first in the commonwealth of letters, they must be envied and calumniated only for being at the head of it.

That which in my opinion ought to be the endeavour of any one who translates Homer, is above all things to keep alive that spirit and fire which makes his chief character: in particular places, where the sense can bear any doubt, to follow the strongest and most poetical, as most agreeing with that character; to copy him in all the variations of his style, and the different modulations of his numbers; to preserve, in the more active or descriptive parts, a warmth and elevation; in the more sedate or narrative, a plainness and solemnity; in the speeches, a fulness and

perspicuity; in the sentences, a shortness and gravity; not to neglect even the little figures and turns on the words, nor sometimes the very cast of the periods; neither to omit nor confound any rites or customs of antiquity; perhaps, too, he ought to include the whole in a shorter compass, than has hitherto been done by any translator, who has tolerably preserved either the sense or poetry. What I would farther recommend to him, is to study his Author rather than from his own text, than from any commentaries, how learned soever, or whatever figure they may make in the estimation of the world; to consider him attentively in comparison with Virgil above all the ancients, and with Milton above all the moderns. Next these, the archbishop of Cambray's Telemachus may give him the truest idea of the spirit and turn of our Author, and Bossu's admirable treatise of the Epic Poem, the justest notion of his design and conduct. But, after all, with whatever judgment and study a man may proceed, or with whatever happiness he may perform such a work, he must hope to please but a few; those only who have at once a taste of poetry, and competent learning. For to satisfy such as want either, is not in the nature of this undertaking; since a mere modern wit can like nothing that is not modern, and a pedant nothing that is not Greek.

What I have done is submitted to the public, from whose opinions I am prepared to learn; though I fear no judges so little as our best poets, who are most sensible of the weight of this task. As for the worst, whatever they shall please to

say, they may give me some concern as they are unhappy men, but none as they are malignant writers. I was guided in this translation by judgments very different from theirs, and by persons for whom they can have no kindness, if an old observation be true, that the strongest antipathy in the world is that of fools to men of wit. Mr. Addison was the first whose advice determined me to undertake this task, who was pleased to write to me upon that occasion in such terms as I cannot repeat without vanity. I was obliged to Sir Richard Steele for a very early recommendation of my undertaking to the public. Dr. Swift promoted my interest with that warmth with which he always serves his friend. The humanity and frankness of Sir Samuel Garth are what I never knew wanting on any occasion. I must also acknowledge with infinite pleasure, the many friendly offices, as well as sincere criticisms, of Mr. Congreve, who had led me the way in translating some parts of Homer; as I wish for the sake of the world he had prevented me in the rest. I must add the name of Mr. Rowe and Dr. Parnell, though I shall take a further opportunity of doing justice to the last, whose good-nature (to give it a great panegyric) is no less extensive than his learning. The favour of these gentlemen is not entirely undeserved by one who bears them so true an affection. But what can I say of the honour so many of the great have done me, while the first names of the age appear as my subscribers, and the most distinguished patrons and ornaments of learning as my chief encouragers? Among these it is a particular plea-

sure to me to find, that my highest obligations are to such who have done most honour to the name of poet: that his grace the Duke of Buckingham was not displeased I should undertake the Author to whom he has given (in his excellent Essay) so complete a praise:

> Read Homer once, and you can read no more;
> For all books else appear so mean, so poor,
> Verse will seem prose, but still persist to read,
> And Homer will be all the books you need.

That the Earl of Halifax was one of the first to favour me, of whom it is hard to say, whether the advancement of the polite arts is more owing to his generosity or his example: that such a genius as my Lord Bolingbroke, not more distinguished in the great scenes of business, than in all the useful and entertaining parts of learning, has not refused to be the critic of these sheets, and the patron of their writer: and that so excellent an imitator of Homer as the noble author of the tragedy of Heroic Love, has continued his partiality to me, from my writing pastorals, to my attempting the Iliad. I cannot deny myself the pride of confessing, that I have had the advantage not only of their advice for the conduct in general, but their correction of several particulars of this translation.

I could say a great deal of the pleasure of being distinguished by the Earl of Carnarvon; but it is almost absurd to particularize any one generous action in a person whose whole life is a continued series of them. Mr. Stanhope, the present secretary of state, will pardon my desire of having it known that he was pleased to pro-

mote this affair. The particular zeal of Mr. Harcourt (the son of the late Lord Chancellor) gave me a proof how much I am honoured in a share of his friendship. I must attribute to the same motive that of several others of my friends, to whom all acknowledgments are rendered unnecessary by the privileges of a familiar correspondence: and I am satisfied I can no way better oblige men of their turn, than by my silence.

In short, I have found more patrons than ever Homer wanted. He would have thought himself happy to have met the same favour at Athens, that has been shown me by its learned rival, the University of Oxford. If my Author had the wits of after ages for his defenders, his translator has had the beauties of the present for his advocates; a pleasure too great to be changed for any fame in reversion. And I can hardly envy him those pompous honours he received after death, when I reflect on the enjoyment of so many agreeable obligations, and easy friendships, which make the satisfaction of life. This distinction is the more to be acknowledged, as it is shown to one whose pen has never gratified the perjudices of particular parties, or the vanities of particular men. Whatever the success may prove, I shall never repent of an undertaking in which I have experienced the candour and friendship of so many persons of merit; and in which I hope to pass some of those years of youth that are generally lost in a circle of follies, after a manner neither wholly unuseful to others, nor disagreeable to myself.

POPE.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

SWEET AUBURN! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheer'd the labouring swain,
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delay'd;
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please;
How often have I loiter'd o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endear'd each scene!
How often have I paus'd on every charm—
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topp'd the neighbouring hill;
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whisp'ring lovers made!
How often have I bless'd the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree—
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old survey'd,
And many a gambol frolick'd o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went round;
And still, as each repeated pleasure tir'd,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspir'd—
The dancing pair that simply sought renown
By holding out to tire each other down;

The swain, mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter titter'd round the place,
The bashful virgin's side-long looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove.
These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like these
With sweet succession, taught e'en toil to please;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,
These were thy charms—but all these charms are fled.

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And Desolation saddens all the green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain;
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But, chok'd with sedges, works its weedy way;
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries;
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall,
And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintain'd its man:

For him light Labour spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life requir'd, but gave no more:
His best companions, innocence and health,
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are alter'd; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain;
Along the lawn, where scatter'd hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose;
And every want to luxury allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.
Those gentler hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that ask'd but little room,
Those healthful sports that grac'd the peaceful scene,
Liv'd in each look, and brighten'd all the green;
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess thy tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds
Amidst thy tangling walks and ruin'd grounds,
And, many a year elaps'd, return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew—
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting, by repose:
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learn'd skill;

Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw:
And as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations pass'd,
Here to return—and die at home at last.

O bless'd retirement, friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, that never must be mine!
How blest is he who crowns, in shades like these,
A youth of labour with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try—
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep;
No surly porter stands, in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate;
But on he moves, to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend;
Sinks to the grave with unperceiv'd decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past.

Sweet was the sound, when oft, at evening's close,
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose;
There, as I pass'd with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came soften'd from below;
The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung,
The sober herd that low'd to meet their young,
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school,
The watch-dog's voice that bay'd the whispering wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind.

These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And fill'd each pause the nightingale had made
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown foot-way tread.
For all the blooming flush of life is fled:
All but yon widow'd, solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forc'd in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread.
To pick her wintry fagget from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn;
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain!

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smil'd,
And still where many a garden-flower grows wild;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was, to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a-year,
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had chang'd, nor wish'd to change, his place;
Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power
By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize,
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wanderings, but reliev'd their pain;
The long-remember'd beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd;

The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talk'd the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds, or tales of sorrow done,
Shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were won.
Pleas'd with his guests, the good man learn'd to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And even his failings lean'd to virtue's side;
But in his duty, prompt at every call,
He watch'd and wept, he pray'd and felt for all;
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries,
To tempt its new-fledg'd offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reprov'd each dull delay,
Allur'd to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain by turns dismay'd,
The reverend champion stood: at his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whisper'd praise.

At church with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorn'd the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevail'd with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remain'd to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran:
Even children follow'd with endearing wile,
And pluck'd his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth express'd;
Their welfare pleas'd him, and their cares distress'd;

To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossom'd furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,
The village master taught his little school.
A man severe he was, and stern to view;
I knew him well, and every truant knew:
Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laugh'd with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd.
Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault.
The village all declar'd how much he knew:
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran that he could gauge;
In arguing too, the parson own'd his skill,
For e'en though vanquish'd he could argue still;
While words of learned length, and thundering sound,
Amaz'd the gazing rustics rang'd around,
And still they gaz'd, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head should carry all he knew.

But past is all his fame. The very spot
Where many a time he triumph'd, is forgot.

Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts inspir'd,
Where gray-beard mirth, and smiling toil retir'd,
Where village statesmen talk'd with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlour-splendours of that festive place;
The white-wash'd wall, the nicely sanded floor,
The varnish'd clock that click'd behind the door:
The chest, contriv'd a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day—
The pictures plac'd for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose;
The hearth, except when winter chill'd the day,
With aspen boughs, and flowers, and fennel gay;
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Rang'd o'er the chimney, glisten'd in a row.

Vain transitory splendours! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall?
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart.
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be press'd,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art.
Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined;
But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth array'd·
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
And, even while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks, if this be joy?
Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge, how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;
Hoards, even beyond the miser's wish, abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around;
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied;
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds;
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth,
[illegible]robb'd the neighbouring fields of half their growth:
[illegible]seat, where solitary sports are seen,
[illegible]naignant spurns the cottage from the green;

Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies;
While thus the land adorn'd for pleasure—all
In barren splendour feebly waits the fall,

As some fair female, unadorn'd and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slights every borrow'd charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes;
But when those charms are pass'd, for charms are frail,
When times advances, and when lovers fail,
She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
In all the glaring impotence of dress:
Thus fares the land, by luxury betray'd;
In nature's simplest charms at first array'd;
But, verging to decline, its splendours rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;
While, scourg'd by famine, from the smiling land,
The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms—a garden, and a grave.

Where then, ah! where shall poverty reside
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?
If to some common's fenceless limits stray'd,
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And even the bare-worn common is denied.

If to the city sped—what waits him there?
To see profusion that he must not share;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combin'd
To pamper luxury, and thin mankind;
To see each joy the sons of pleasure know,
Extorted from his fellow-creatures' woe:

Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;
Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way:
The dome where Pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly deck'd, admits the gorgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!
Sure these denote one universal joy!—
Are these thy serious thoughts?—ah! turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shivering female lies.
She once, perhaps, in village plenty bless'd,
Has wept at tales of innocence distress'd:
Her modest looks the cottage might adorn;
Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn:
Now lost to all—her friends, her virtue fled,
Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
And, pinch'd with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,
When idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel, and robes of country brown.
Do thine, sweet AUBURN! thine, the loveliest train,
Do thy fair tribes participate her pain?
Even now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread!
Ah, no! To distant climes, a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charm'd before,
Various terrors of that horrid shore;

Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray
And fiercely shed intolerable day;
Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields with rank luxuriance crown'd
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
And savage men more murderous still than they;
While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
Mingling the ravag'd landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene,
The cooling brook, the grassy-vested green;
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
The only shelter'd thefts of harmless love.
Good Heaven! what sorrows gloom'd that parting day,
That call'd them from their native walks away,
When the poor exiles, every pleasure pass'd,
Hung round the bowers, and fondly look'd their last,
And took a long farewell, and wish'd in vain
For scats like these beyond the western main;
And shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Return'd and wept, and still return'd to weep.
The good old sire, the first, prepar'd to go
The new-found worlds, and wept for others woe;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wish'd for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent, went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for a father's arms.

With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And bless'd the cot where every pleasure rose;
And kiss'd her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
And clasp'd them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.—
O luxury! thou curs'd by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchang'd are things like these for thee!
How do thy portions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigour not their own;
At every draught large and more large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe;
Till sapp'd their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.
E'en now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
E'en now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural Virtues leave the land.
Down, where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail,
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,
Downward they move—a melancholy band—
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented Toil, and hospitable Care,
And kind connubial Tenderness are there;
And Piety with wishes plac'd above,
And steady Loyalty, and faithful Love.
And thou, sweet Poetry! thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit in these degenerate times of shame
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;

Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride;
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
Thou guide by which the nobler arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well.
Farewell! and oh! where'er thy voice be tried,
On Tornea's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side,
Whether where equinoctial fervours glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigours of th' inclement clime;
Aid slighted Truth: with thy persuasive strain
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain;
Teach him, that states, of native strength possess'd,
Though very poor, may still be very blest;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
As ocean sweeps the labour'd mole away;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

GOLDSMITH.

MESSIAH,

A sacred Eclogue in imitation of Virgil's Pollio.

Ye nymphs of Solyma! begin the song:
To heavenly themes sublimer strains belong.
The mossy fountains and the sylvan shades,
The dreams of Pindus and the Aonian maids,
Delight no more—O Thou my voice inspire
Who touch'd Isaiah's hallow'd lips with fire!
"Rapt into future times, the bard begun:
A Virgin shall conceive, a Virgin bear a Son!
From Jesse's root behold a branch arise,
Whose sacred flower with fragrance fills the skies:
The ethereal spirit o'er its leaves shall move,
And on its top descends the mystic dove.
Ye heavens! from high the dewy nectar pour,
And in soft silence shed the kindly shower!
The sick and weak the healing plant shall aid,
From storms a shelter, and from heat a shade.
All crimes shall cease, and ancient frauds shall fail;
Returning Justice lift aloft her scale:
Peace o'er the world her olive wand extend,
And white-robed Innocence from heaven descend.
Swift fly years, and rise the expected morn!
Oh spring to light, auspicious Babe, be born!
See, Nature hastes her earliest wreaths to bring,
With all the incense of the breathing spring:

See lofty Lebanon his head advance,
See nodding forests on the mountains dance:
See spicy clouds from lowly Saron rise,
And Carmel's flowery top perfumes the skies!
Hark! a glad voice the lonely desert cheers;
Prepare the way! A God, a God appears!
A God, a God! the vocal hills reply;
The rocks proclaim the approaching Deity.
Lo, earth receives him from the bending skies!
Sink down, ye mountains, and ye valleys rise!
With heads declined, ye cedars, homage pay;
Be smooth, ye rocks; ye rapid floods, give way.
The Saviour comes! by ancient bards foretold:
Hear him, ye deaf; and all ye blind, behold!
He from thick films shall purge the visual ray,
And on the sightless eye-ball pour the day:
'Tis he the obstructed paths of sound shall clear,
And bid new music charm the unfolding ear:
The dumb shall sing, the lame his crutch forego,
And leap exulting, like the bounding roe.
No sigh, no murmur, the wide world shall hear;
From every face he wipes off every tear.
In adamantine chains shall death be bound,
And hell's grim tyrant feel the eternal wound.
As the good shepherd tends his fleecy care,
Seeks freshest pasture, and the purest air;
Explores the lost, the wandering sheep directs,
By day o'ersees them, and by night protects;
The tender lambs he raises in his arms,
Feeds from his hand, and in his bosom warms:
Thus shall mankind his guardian care engage,
The promised father of the future age.

No more shall nation against nation rise,
Nor ardent warriors meet with hateful eyes,
Nor fields with gleaming steel be cover'd o'er,
The brazen trumpets kindle rage no more;
But useless lances into scythes shall bend,
And the broad falchion in a plough-share end.
Then palaces shall rise; the joyful son
Shall finish what his short-lived sire begun;
Their vines a shadow to their race shall yield,
And the same hand that sow'd, shall reap the field.
The swain in barren deserts with surprise,
Sees lilies spring, and sudden verdure rise;
And starts, amidst the thirsty wilds to hear
New falls of water murmuring in his ear,
On rifted rocks, the dragon's late abodes,
The green reed trembles, and the bulrush nods.
Waste sandy valleys once perplex'd with thorn;
The spiry fir and shapely box adorn:
To leafless shrubs the flowery palms succeed,
And odorous myrtle to the noisome weed
The lambs with wolves shall graze the verdant mead,
And boys in flowery bands the tiger lead.
The steer and lion at one crib shall meet,
And harmless serpents lick the pilgrim's feet.
The smiling infant in his hand shall take,
The crested basilisk and speckled snake,
Pleased, the green lustre of the scales survey,
And with their forky tongue shall innocently play.
Rise, crown'd with light, imperial Salem rise!
Exalt thy towery head, and lift thy eyes!
See a long race thy spacious courts adorn;
See future sons, and daughters yet unborn,

Incrowding ranks on every side arise,
Demanding life, impatient for the skies!
See barbarous nations at thy gates attend,
Walk in thy light, and in thy temple bend;
See thy bright altars throng'd with prostrate kings,
And heap'd with products of Sabean springs!
For thee Idumea's spicy forests blow,
And seeds of gold in Ophir's mountains glow,
See heaven its sparkling portals wide display,
And break upon thee in a flood of day!
No more the rising sun shall gild the morn,
Nor evening Cynthia fill her silver horn;
But lost, dissolved in thy superior rays,
One tide of glory, one unclouded blaze
O'erflow thy courts: the Light himself shall shine,
Reveal'd and God's eternal day be thine!
The seas shall waste, the skies in smoke decay,
Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away;
But fix'd his word, his saving power remains;
Thy realm for ever lasts, thy own MESSIAH reigns!

POPE.

THE VOYAGE.

Ships, ships, I will descrie you
Amidst the main,
I will come and try you,
What you are protecting,
And projecting,
What's your end and aim.
One goes abroad for merchandize and trading,
Another stays to keep his country from invading,
A third is coming home with rich and wealthy lading.
Hallo! my fancie, whither wilt thou go?

OLD POLME.

To an American visiting Europe, the long voyage he has to make is an excellent preparative. The temporary absence of worldly scenes and employments, produces a state of mind peculiarly fitted to receive new and vivid impressions. The vast space of waters that separates the hemispheres is like a blank page in existence. There is no gradual transition by which, as in Europe, the features and population of one country blend almost imperceptibly with those of another. From the moment you lose sight of the land you have left, all is vacancy until you step on the opposite shore, and are launched at once into the bustle and novelties of another world.

In travelling by land there is a continuity of scene, and a connected succession of persons and incidents that carry on the story of life, and lessen the effect of absence and separation. We drag, it is true, "a lengthening chain" at each remove of our pilgrimage; but the chain is unbrok-

en: we can trace it back link by link; and we feel that the last of them still grapples us to home. But a wide sea voyage severs us at once. It makes us conscious of being cast loose from the secure anchorage of settled life, and sent adrift upon a doubtful world. It interposes a gulf, not merely imaginary, but real, between us and our homes—a gulf subject to tempest, and fear, and uncertainty, that makes distance palpable, and return precarious.

Such, at least, was the case with myself. As I saw the last blue line of my native land fade away like a cloud in the horizon, it seemed as if I had closed one volume of the world and its concerns, and had time for meditation, before I opened another. That land, too, now vanishing from my view, which contained all that was most dear to me in life; what vicissitudes might occur in it—what changes might take place in me, before I should visit it again. Who can tell when he sets forth to wander, whither he may be driven by the uncertain currents of existence; or when he may return; or whether it may ever be his lot to revisit the scenes of his childhood?

I said that at sea all is vacancy; I should correct the expression. To one given to day-dreaming, and fond of losing himself in reveries, a sea voyage is full of subjects for meditation; but then they are the wonders of the deep, and of the air, and rather tend to abstract the mind from worldly themes. I delighted to loll over the quarter railing, or climb to the main top, of a calm day, and muse for hours together on the tranquil bosom of a summer's sea;—to gaze upon the piles

of golden clouds just peering above the horizon, fancy them some fairy realms, and people them with a creation of my own;—to watch the gentle undulating billows, rolling their silver volumes as if to die away on those happy shores.

There was a delicious sensation of mingled security and awe with which I looked down, from my giddy height, on the monsters of the deep at their uncouth gambols. Shoals of porpoises tumbling about the bow of the ship; the grampus slowly heaving his huge form above the surface; or, the ravenous shark, darting like a spectre, through the blue waters. My imagination would conjure up all that I had heard or read of the watery world beneath me; of the finny herds that roam its fathomless valleys; of the shapeless monsters that lurk among the very foundations of the earth; and of those wild phantasms that swell the tales of fishermen and sailors.

Sometimes a distant sail, gliding along the edge of the ocean, would be another theme of idle speculation. How interesting this fragment of a world, hastening to rejoin the great mass of existence! What a glorious monument of human invention that has thus triumphed over wind and wave; has brought the ends of the world into communion; has established an interchange of blessings, pouring into the sterile regions of the north all the luxuries of the south; has diffused the light of knowledge and the charities of cultivated life; and has thus bound together those scattered portions of the human race, between which nature seemed to have thorwn an insurmountable barrier.

We one day descried some shapeless object drifting at a distance. At sea, every thing that breaks the monotony of the surrounding expanse attracts attention. It proved to be the mast of a ship that must have been completely wrecked; for there were the remains of handkerchiefs, by which some of the crew had fastened themselves to this spar, to prevent their being washed off by the waves. There was no trace by which the name of the ship could be ascertained. The wreck had evidently drifted about for many months; clusters of shell fish had fastened about it, and long sea weeds flaunted at its sides. But where, thought I, is the crew? Their struggle has long been over—they have gone down amidst the roar of the tempest—their bones lie whitening among the caverns of the deep. Silence—oblivion, like the waves, have closed over them, and no one can tell the story of their end. What sighs have been wafted after that ship; what prayers offered up at the deserted fireside of home! How often has the mistress, the wife, the mother, pored over the daily news, to catch some casual intelligence of this rover of the deep. How has expectation darkened into anxiety—anxiety into dread—and dread into despair! Alas! not one memento shall ever return for love to cherish. All that shall ever be known, is that she sailed from her port, "and was never heard of more!"

The sight of this wreck, as usual, gave rise to many dismal anecdotes. This was particularly the case in the evening, when the weather, which had hitherto been fair, began to look wild and

threatening, and gave indications of one of those sudden storms that will sometimes break in upon the serenity of a summer voyage. As we sat round the dull light of a lamp in the cabin, that made the gloom more ghastly, every one had his tale of ship-wreck and disaster. I was particularly struck with a short one related by the captain.

"As I was once sailing," said he, "in a fine stout ship, across the banks of Newfoundland, one of those heavy fogs that prevail in those parts rendered it impossible for us to see far a-head even in the day time; but at night the weather was so thick that we could not distinguish any object at twice the length of the ship. I kept lights at the mast head, and a constant watch forward to look out for fishing smacks, which are accustomed to lie at anchor on the banks. The wind was blowing a smacking breeze, and we were going at a great rate through the water. Suddenly the watch gave the alarm of 'a sail a-head;'—it was scarcely uttered before we were upon her. She was a small schooner, at anchor, with her broadside towards us. The crew were all asleep, and had neglected to hoist a light. We struck her just a-midships. The force, the size, and weight of our vessel bore her down below the waves; we passed over her, and were hurried on our course. As the crashing wreck was sinking beneath us, I had a glimpse of two or three half-naked wretches rushing from her cabin; they just started from their beds to be swallowed shrieking by the waves. I heard their drowning cry mingling with the wind. The blast that bore it to our ears swept us out of all farther hearing. I shall never forget that cry! It was

some time before we could put the ship about, he was under such head-way. We returned, as nearly as we could guess, to the place where the schooner had anchored. We cruised about for several hours in the dense fog. We fired signal guns, and listened if we might hear the hallos of any survivors: but all was silent—we never saw or heard any thing of them more."

I confess these stories, for a time, put an end to all my fine fancies. The storm increased with the night. The sea was lashed into tremendous confusion. There was a fearful, sullen sound of rushing waves, and broken surges. Deep called unto deep. At times the black volume of clouds over head seemed rent asunder by flashes of lightning that quivered along the foaming billows, and made the succeeding darkness doubly terrible. The thunders bellowed over the wild waste of waters, and were echoed and prolonged by the mountain waves. As I saw the ship staggering and plunging among these roaring caverns, it seemed miraculous that she regained her balance, or preserved her buoyancy. Her yards would dip into the water: her bow was almost buried beneath the waves. Sometimes an impending surge appeared ready to overwhelm her, and nothing but a dextrous movement of the helm preserved her from the shock.

When I retired to my cabin the awful scene still followed me. The whistling of the wind through the rigging sounded like funereal wailings. The creaking of the masts, the straining and groaning of bulk heads, as the ship laboured in the weltering sea, were frightful. As I

heard the waves rushing along the side of the ship, and roaring in my very ear, it seemed as if Death were raging round this floating prison, seeking for his prey: the mere starting of a nail, the yawning of a seam might give him entrance.

A fine day, however, with a tranquil sea and favouring breeze, soon put all these dismal reflections to flight. It is impossible to resist the gladdening influence of fine weather and fair wind at sea. When the ship is decked out in all her canvas, every sail swelled, and careering gaily over the curling waves, how lofty, how gallant she appears—how she seems to lord it over the deep! I might fill a volume with the reveries of a sea voyage, for with me it is almost a continual reverie—but it is time to get to shore.

It was a fine sunny morning when the thrilling cry of "land!" was given from the mast head. None but those who have experienced it, can form an idea of the delicious throng of sensations which rush into an American's bosom, when he first comes in sight of Europe. There is a volume of associations with the very name. It is the land of promise, teeming with every thing of which his childhood has heard, or on which his studious years have pondered.

From that time until the moment of arrival it was all feverish excitement. The ships of war, that prowled like guardian giants along the coast; the headlands of Ireland, stretching out into the channel; the Welsh mountains, towering into the clouds; all were objects of intense interest. As we sailed up the Mersey, I reconnoitred the shores with a telescope. My eye dwelt with de-

light on neat cottages, with their trim shrubberies and green grass-plots. I saw the mouldering ruin of an abbey overrun with ivy, and the lower spire of a village church rising from the brow of a neighbouring hill;—all were characteristic of England.

The tide and wind were so favourable, that the ship was enabled to come at once to the pier. It was thronged with people; some, idle lookers-on, others eager expectants of friends or relatives. I could distinguish the merchant to whom the ship was consigned. I knew him by his calculating brow and restless air. His hands were thrust into his pockets; he was whistling thoughtfully, and walking to and fro, a small space having been accorded him by the crowd in deference to his temporary importance. There were repeated cheerings and salutations interchanged between the shore and the ship, as friends happened to recognise each other. I particularly noticed one young woman of humble dress, but interesting demeanour. She was leaning forward from among the crowd; her eye hurried over the ship as it neared the shore, to catch some wished for countennce. She seemed disappointed and agitated; when I heard a faint voice call her name.—It was from a poor sailor who had been ill all the voyage, and had excited the sympathy of every one on board. When the weather was fine, his messmates had spread a mattress for him on deck in the shade, but of late his illness had so increased, that he had taken to his hammock, and only breathed a wish that he might see his wife before he died. He had

been helped on deck as we came up the river and was now leaning against the shrouds, with a countenance so wasted, so pale, so ghastly that it was no wonder even the eye of affection did not recognise him. But, at the sound of his voice, her eye darted on his features; it read, at once, a whole volume of sorrow; she clasped her hands, uttered a faint shriek, and stood wringing them in silent agony.

All now was hurry and bustle. The meetings of acquaintances—the greetings of friends—the consultations of men of business. I alone was solitary and idle. I had no friend to meet, no cheering to receive. I stepped upon the land of my fore-fathers—but felt that I was a stranger in the land.

IRVING.

ROSCOE.

In the service of mankind to be
A guardian god below; still to employ
The mind's brave ardour in heroic aims,
Such as may raise us o'er the groveling herd,
And make us shine for ever—that is life.
THOMPSON.

ONE of the first places to which a stranger is taken in Liverpool, is the Athenæum. It is established on a liberal and judicious plan; it contains a good library, and spacious reading room, and is the great literary resort of the place. Go there at what hour you may, you are sure to find it filled with grave-looking personages, deeply absorbed in the study of newspapers.

As I was once visiting this haunt of the learned, my attention was attracted to a person just entering the room. He was advanced in life, tall, and of a form that might once have been commanding, but it was a little bowed by time—perhaps by care. He had a noble Roman style of countenance; a head that would have pleased a painter; and though some slight furrows on his brow showed that wasting thought had been busy there, yet his eye still beamed with the fire of a poetic soul. There was something in his whole appearance that indicated a being of a different order from the bustling race around him.

I enquired his name, and was informed that it was Roscoe. I drew back with an involuntary

feeling of veneration. This, then, was an author of celebrity; this was one of those men, whose voices have gone forth to the ends of the earth; with whose minds I have communed even in the solitudes of America. Accustomed, as we are in our country, to know European writers only by their works, we cannot conceive of them, as of other men, engrossed by trivial or sordid pursuits, and jostling with the crowd of common minds in the dusty paths of life. They pass before our imaginations like superior beings radiant with the emanations of their own genius, and surrounded by a halo of literary glory.

To find, therefore, the elegant historian of the Medici, mingling among the busy sons of traffic, at first shocked my poetical ideas; but it is from the very circumstances and situation in which he has been placed, that Mr. Roscoe derives his highest claims to admiration. It is interesting to notice how some minds seem almost to create themselves, springing up under every disadvantage, and working their solitary but irresistible way through a thousand obstacles. Nature seems to delight in disappointing the assiduities of art, with which it would rear legitimate dulness to maturity; and to glory in the vigour and luxuriance of her chance productions. She scatters the seeds of genius to the winds, and though some may perish among the stony places of the world, and some be choked by the thorns and brambles of early adversity, yet others will now and then strike root even in the clefts of the rock, struggle bravely up into sunshine, and spread over their sterile birth-place all the beauties of vegetation.

Such has been the case with Mr. Roscoe. Born in a place apparently ungenial to the growth of literary talent; in the very market-place of trade; without fortune, family connections, or patronage; self-prompted, self-sustained, and almost self-taught, he has conquered every obstacle, achieved his way to eminence, and, having become one of the ornaments of the nation, has turned the whole force of his talents and influence to advance and embellish his native town.

Indeed, it is this last trait in his character which has given him the greatest interest in my eyes, and induced me particularly to point him out to my countrymen. Eminent as are his literary merits, he is but one among the many distinguished authors of this intellectual nation. They however, in general, live but for their own fame, or their own pleasures. Their private history presents no lesson to the world, or, perhaps, a humiliating one of human frailty and inconsistency. At best, they are prone to steal away from the bustle and common-place of busy existence; to indulge in the selfishness of lettered ease; and to revel in scenes of mental, but exclusive, enjoyment.

Mr. Roscoe, on the contrary, has claimed none of the accorded privileges of talent. He has shut himself up in no garden of thought, nor elysium of fancy; but has gone forth into the highways and thoroughfares of life; he has planted bowers by the way side, for the refreshment of the pilgrim and the sojourner, and has opened pure fountains, where the labouring man may turn aside from the dust and heat of the day, and

drink of the living streams of knowledge. There is a "daily beauty in his life," on which mankind may meditate and grow better. It exhibits no lofty and, almost useless, because inimitable, example of excellence; but presents a picture of active, yet simple and imitable virtues, which are within every man's reach, but which not many exercise, or this world would be a paradise.

But his private life is peculiarly worthy the attention of the citizens of our young and busy country, where literature and the elegant arts must grow up side by side with the coarser plants of daily necessity; and must depend for their culture, not on the exclusive devotion of time and wealth, nor the quickening rays of titled patronage, but on hours and seasons snatched from the pursuit of worldly interests by intelligent and public spirited individuals.

He has shown how much may be done for a place in hours of leisure by one master spirit, and how completely it can give its own impress to surrounding objects. Like his own Lorenzo De Medici, on whom he seems to have fixed his eye as on a pure model of antiquity, he has interwoven the history of his life with the history of his native town, and has made the foundations of its fame the monuments of his virtues. Wherever you go in Liverpool, you perceive traces of his footsteps in all that is elegant and liberal. He found the tide of wealth flowing merely in the channels of traffic; he has diverted from it invigorating rills to refresh the gardens of literature. By his own example and constant exertions, he has effected that union of commerce

and the intellectual pursuits, so eloquently recommended in one of his latest writings;* and has practically proved how beautifully they may be brought to harmonize, and to benefit each other. The noble institutions for literary and scientific purposes, which reflect such credit on Liverpool, and are giving such an impulse to the public mind, have mostly been originated, and have all been effectively promoted, by Mr. Roscoe; and when we consider the rapidly increasing opulence and magnitude of that town, which promises to vie in commercial importance with the metropolis, it will be perceived that in awakening an ambition of mental improvement among its inhabitants he has effected a great benefit to the cause of British literature.

In America, we know Mr. Roscoe only as the author—in Liverpool he is spoken of as the banker; and I was told of his having been unfortunate in business. I could not pity him, as I heard some rich men do. I considered him far above the reach of my pity. Those who live only for the world, and in the world, may be cast down by the frowns of adversity: but a man like Roscoe is not to be overcome by the mutations of fortune. They do but drive him in upon the resources of his own mind: to the superior society of his own thoughts; which the best of men are apt sometimes to neglect, and to roam abroad in search of less worthy associates. He is independent of the world around him. He lives with antiquity and posterity; in antiquity, in the sweet communion of studious retirement; and

* Address on the opening of the Liverpool Institution.

with posterity; in the generous aspirings after future renown. The solitude of such a mind is its state of highest enjoyment. It is then visited by those elevated meditations which are the proper aliment of noble souls, and are like manna sent from heaven, in the wilderness of this world.

While my feelings were yet alive on the subject, it was my fortune to light on farther traces of Mr. Roscoe. I was riding out with a gentleman, to view the environs of Liverpool, when he turned off, through a gate, into some ornamented grounds. After riding a short distance, we came to a spacious mansion of freestone, built in the Grecian style. It was not in the purest taste, yet it had an air of elegance, and the situation was delightful. A fine lawn sloped away from it studded with clumps of trees, so disposed as to break a soft fertile country into a variety of landscapes. The Mersey was seen winding a broad quiet sheet of water through an expanse of green meadow land; while the Welsh mountains, blending with the clouds and melting into distance, bordered the horizon.

This was Roscoe's favourite residence during the days of his prosperity. It had been the seat of elegant hospitality and literary retirement. The house was now silent and deserted. I saw the windows of the study, which looked out upon the soft scenery I have mentioned. The windows were closed—the library was gone. Two or three ill-favoured beings were loitering about the place, whom my fancy pictured into retainers of the law. It was like visiting some classic fountain, that had once swelled its pure waters

in a sacred shade, but finding it dry and dusty, with the lizard and the toad brooding over the shattered marbles.

I enquired after the fate of Mr. Roscoe's library, which had consisted of scarce and foreign books, from many of which he had drawn the materials for his Italian histories. It had passed under the hammer of the auctioneer, and was dispersed about the country. The good people of the vicinity thronged like wreckers to get some part of the noble vessel that had been driven on shore. Did such a scene admit of ludicrous associations, we might imagine something whimsical in this strange irruption into the regions of learning. Pigmies rummaging the armoury of a giant, and contending for the possession of weapons which they could not wield. We might picture to ourselves some knot of speculators, debating with calculating brow over the quaint binding and illuminated margin of an obsolete author; of the air of intense, but baffled sagacity, with which some successful purchaser attempted to dive into the black-letter bargain he had secured.

It is a beautiful incident in the story of Mr. Roscoe's misfortunes, and one which cannot fail to interest the studious mind, that the parting with his books seems to have touched upon his tenderest feelings, and to have been the only circumstance that could provoke the notice of his muse. The scholar only knows how dear these silent, yet eloquent, companions of pure thoughts and innocent hours become in the season of adversity. When all that is worldly turns to dross around us, these only retain their steady value.

When friends grow cold, and the converse of intimates languishes into vapid civility and commonplace, these only continue the unaltered countenance of happier days, and cheer us with that true friendship which never deceived hope, nor deserted sorrow.

I do not wish to censure: but, surely, if the people of Liverpool had been properly sensible of what was due to Mr. Roscoe and themselves, his library would never have been sold. Good worldly reasons may, doubtless, be given for the circumstance, which it would be difficult to combat with others that might seem merely fanciful; but it certainly appears to me such an opportunity as seldom occurs, of cheering a noble mind struggling under misfortunes, by one of the most delicate, but most expressive tokens of public sympathy. It is difficult, however, to estimate a man of genius properly who is daily before our eyes. He becomes mingled and confounded with other men. His great qualities lose their novelty, and we become too familiar with the common materials which form the basis even of the loftiest character. Some of Mr. Roscoe's townsmen may regard him merely as a man of business; others as a politician; all find him engaged like themselves in ordinary occupations, and surpassed, perhaps, by themselves on some points of worldly wisdom. Even that amiable and unostentatious simplicity of character, which gives the nameless grace to real excellence, may cause him to be undervalued by some coarse minds, who do not know that true worth is always [illegible] of glare and pretension. But the man

of letters who speaks of Liverpool, speaks of it as the residence of Roscoe.—The intelligent traveller who visits it, inquires where Roscoe is to be seen.—He is the literary land-mark of the place, indicating its existence to the distant scholar.—He is like Pompey's column at Alexandria, towering alone in classic dignity.

The following sonnet, addressed by Mr. Roscoe to his books on parting with them, is alluded to in the preceding article. If any thing can add effect to the pure feeling and elevated thought here displayed, it is the conviction that the whole is no effusion of fancy, but a faithful transcript from the writer's heart :—

TO MY BOOKS.

As one, who, destined from his friends to part,
Regrets his loss, but hopes again ere while
To share their converse and enjoy their smile,
And tempers, as he may, affliction's dart;

Thus, loved associates, chiefs of elder art,
Teachers of wisdom, who could care beguile
My tedious hours, and lighten every toil,
I now resign you; nor with fainting heart

For pass a few short years, or days, or hours,
And happier seasons may their dawn unfold,
And all your sacred fellowship restore;
When, freed from earth, unlimited its powers,
Mind shall with mind direct communion hold,
And kindred spirits meet to part no more.

THE WIFE.

> The treasures of the deep are not so precious
> As are the conceal'd comforts of a man
> Lock'd up in woman's love. I scent the air
> Of blessings, when I come but near the house.
> What a delicious breath marriage sends forth...
> The violet bed's not sweeter.
>
> MIDDLETON.

I HAVE often had occasion to remark the fortitude with which women sustain the most overwhelming reverses of fortune. Those disasters which break down the spirit of a man, and prostrate him in the dust, seem to call forth all the energies of the softer sex, and give such intrepidity and elevation to their character, that at times it approaches to sublimity. Nothing can be more touching than to behold a soft and tender female who had been all weakness and dependence, and alive to every trivial roughness, while treading the prosperous paths of life, suddenly rising in mental force to be the comforter and supporter of her husband under misfortune, and abiding, with unshrinking firmness, the bitterest blasts of adversity.

As the vine, which has long twined its graceful foliage about the oak, and been lifted by it into sunshine, will, when the hardy plant is rifted by the thunderbolt, cling round it with its caressing tendrils, and bind up its shattered boughs; so is it beautifully ordered by Providence that wo

man, who is the mere dependant and ornament of man in his happier hours, should be his stay and solace when smitten with sudden calamity; winding herself into the rugged recesses of his nature, tenderly supporting the drooping head, and binding up the broken heart.

I was once congratulating a friend, who had around him a blooming family, knit together in the strongest affection. "I can wish you no better lot," said he, with enthusiasm, "than to have a wife and children.—If you are prosperous, there they are to share your prosperity; if otherwise, there they are to comfort you." And, indeed, I have observed that a married man falling into misfortune is more apt to retrieve his situation in the world than a single one; partly because he is more stimulated to exertion by the necessities of the helpless and beloved beings who depend upon him for subsistence; but chiefly because his spirits are soothed and relieved by domestic endearments, and his self-respect kept alive by finding, that though all abroad is darkness and humiliation, yet there is still a little world of love at home, of which he is the monarch. Whereas a single man is apt to run to waste and self-neglect; to fancy himself lonely and abandoned, and his heart to fall to ruin like some deserted mansion, for want of an inhabitant.

These observations call to mind a little domestic story, of which I was once a witness. My intimate friend, Leslie, had married a beautiful and accomplished girl, who had been brought up in the midst of fashionable life. She had, it is true, no fortune, but that of my friend was

ample; and he delighted in the anticipation o indulging her in every elegant pursuit, and admi nistering to those delicate tastes and fancies tha spread a kind of witchery about the sex.—"He life," said he, "shall be like a fairy tale."

The very difference in their characters pro duced an harmonious combination: he was of romantic and somewhat serious cast; she wa all life and gladness. I have often noticed th mute rapture with which he would gaze upo her in company, of which her sprightly power made her the delight; and now, in the midst o applause, her eye would still turn to him, as i there alone she sought favour and acceptance When leaning on his arm, her slender form con trasted finely with his tall manly person. The fond confiding air with which she looked up t him seemed to call forth a flush of triumphan pride and cherishing tenderness, as if he doted o his lovely burthen for its very helplessness. Neve did a couple set forward on the flowery path o early and well-suited marriage with a fairer pros pect of felicity.

It was the mishap of my friend, however, t have embarked his fortune in large speculations and he had not been married many months when, by a succession of sudden disasters, it wa swept from him, and he found himself reduce almost to penury. For a time he kept his situ ation to himself, and went about with a haggar countenance, and a breaking heart. His life wa but a protracted agony; and what rendered i more insupportable was the necessity of keep ing up a smile in the presence of his wife: fo

could not bring himself to overwhelm her with the news. She saw, however, with the quick eyes of affection, that all was not well with him. She marked his altered looks and stifled sighs, and was not to be deceived by his sickly and vapid attempts at cheerfulness. She tasked all her sprightly powers and tender blandishments to win him back to happiness; but she only drove the arrow deeper into his soul. The more he saw cause to love her, the more torturing was the thought that he was soon to make her wretched. A little while, thought he, and the smile will vanish from that cheek—the song will die away from those lips—the lustre of those eyes will be quenched with sorrow; and the happy heart, which now beats lightly in that bosom, will be weighed down like mine, by the cares and miseries of the world. . . . .

At length he came to me one day and related his whole situation in a tone of the deepest despair. When I had heard him through, I enquired, "Does your wife know all this?"—At the question he burst into an agony of tears. "For God's sake!" cried he, "if you have any pity on me, don't mention my wife; it is the thought of her that drives me almost to madness!"

"And why not?" said I. "She must know it sooner or later: you cannot keep it long from her, and the intelligence may break upon her in a more startling manner, than if imparted by yourself; for the accents of those we love soften the harshest tidings. Besides, you are depriving yourself of the comforts of her sympathy; and not merely that, but also endangering the only bond

that can keep hearts together—an unreserved community of thought and feeling. She will soon perceive that something is secretly preying upon your mind; and true love will not brook reserve: it feels undervalued and outraged, when even the sorrows of those it loves are concealed from it."

"Oh, but, my friend! to think what a blow I am to give to all her future prospects—how I am to strike her very soul to the earth, by telling her that her husband is a beggar: that she is to forego all the elegancies of life—all the pleasures of society—to shrink with me into indigence and obscurity! To tell her that I have dragged her down from the sphere in which she might have continued to move in constant brightness—the light of every eye—the admiration of every heart!—How can she bear poverty? She has been brought up in all the refinements of opulence. How can she bear neglect? She has been the idol of society. Oh, it will break her heart—it will break her heart!"

I saw his grief was eloquent, and I let it have its flow; for sorrow relieves itself by words. When his paroxysm had subsided, and he had relapsed into moody silence, I resumed the subject gently, and urged him to break his situation at once to his wife. He shook his head mournfully, but positively.

"But how are you to keep it from her? It is necessary she should know it, that you may take the steps proper to the alteration of your circumstances. You must change your style of living, [illegible]nay," [illegible]erving a pang to pass across his coun[illegible]enance, "don't let that afflict you. I am sure

you have never placed your happiness in outward show—you have yet friends, warm friends, who will not think the worse of you for being less splendidly lodged; and surely it does not require a palace to be happy with Mary——"

"I could be happy with her," cried he, convulsively, "in a hovel! I could go down with her into poverty and the dust!—I could—I could——God bless her!—God bless her!" cried he, bursting into a transport of grief and tenderness.

"And believe me, my friend," said I, stepping up and grasping him warmly by the hand,—"believe me she can be the same with you. Ay, more: it will be a source of pride and triumph to her—it will call forth all the latent energies and fervent sympathies of her nature; for she will rejoice to prove that she loves you for yourself. There is in every true woman's heart a spark of heavenly fire, which lies dormant in the broad daylight of prosperity; but which kindles up and beams and blazes in the dark hour of adversity. No man knows what the wife of his bosom is—no man knows what a ministering angel she is—until he has gone with her through the fiery trials of this world."

There was something in the earnestness of my manner and the figurative style of my language, that caught the excited imagination of Leslie. I know the auditor I had to deal with; and following up the impression I had made, I finished by persuading him to go home and unburden his sad heart to his wife.

I must confess, notwithstanding all I had said, I felt some little solicitude for the result. Who

can calculate on the fortitude of one whose who life has been a round of pleasures? Her ga spirits might revolt at the dark downward pat of low humility suddenly pointed out before he and might cling to the sunny regions in whic they had hitherto revelled. Besides, ruin i fashionable life is accompanied by so many gall ing mortifications, to which in other ranks it is stranger. In short, I could not meet Leslie th next morning without trepidation. He had mad the disclosure,

"And how did she bear it?"

"Like an angel! It seemed rather to be relief to her mind, for she threw her arms roun my neck, and asked if this was all that had lately made me unhappy. But poor girl," added he "she cannot realize the change we must undergo She has no idea of poverty but in the abstract she has only read of it in poetry, where it is allie to love. She feels as yet no privation: she suffer no loss of accustomed conveniencies nor elegan cies. When we come practically to experience its sordid cares, its paltry wants, its petty humili ations—then will be the real trial."

"But," said I, "now that you have got over the severest task, that of breaking it to her, the sooner you let the world into the secret the better. The disclosure may be mortifying: but then it is a single misery, and soon over: whereas you otherwise suffer it, in anticipation, every hour in the day. It is not poverty so much as pretence, that harasses a [redacted]ined man—the struggle between a proud mi[redacted]d an empty purse—the keeping up a hol[redacted] that must soon come to an end.

have the courage to appear poor, and you disarm poverty of its sharpest sting." On this point I found Leslie perfectly prepared. He had no *false pride* himself; and as to his wife she was only anxious to comform to their altered fortunes.

Some days afterwards he called upon me in the evening. He had disposed of his dwelling house, and taken a small cottage in the country, a few miles from town. He had been busied all day in sending out furniture. The new establishment required few articles, and those of the simplest kind. All the splendid furniture of his late residence had been sold, excepting his wife's harp. That, he said, was too closely associated with the idea of herself: it belonged to the little story of their loves; for some of the sweetest moments of their courtship were those when he had leaned over that instrument, and listened to the melting tones of her voice. I could not but smile at this instance of romantic gallantry in a doting husband.

He was now going out to the cottage, where his wife had been all day superintending its arrangement. My feelings had become strongly interested in the progress of this family story; and, as it was a fine evening, I offered to accompany him.

He was wearied with the fatigues of the day, and, as we walked out, fell into a fit of gloomy musing.

"Poor Mary!" at length, broke, with a heavy sigh, from his lips.

"And what of her?" asked I: "has any thing happened to her?"

"What!" said he, darting an impatient glance, "is it nothing to be reduced to this paltry situation—to be caged in a miserable cottage—to be obliged to toil almost in the menial concerns of her wretched habitation?"

"Has she then repined at the change?"

"Repined! she has been nothing but sweetness and good humour. Indeed, she seems in better spirits than I have ever known her; she has been to me all love, and tenderness, and comfort!"

"Admirable girl," exclaimed I. "You call yourself poor, my friend; you never were so rich—you never knew the boundless treasures of excellence you possessed in that woman."

"Oh! but, my friend, if this first meeting at the cottage were over, I think I could then be comfortable. But this is her first day of real experience: she has been introduced into a humble dwelling; she has been employed all day in arranging its miserable equipments—she has, for the first time, known the fatigues of domestic employment—she has, for the first time, looked around her on a home destitute of every thing elegant, almost of every thing convenient; and may now be sitting down, exhausted and spiritless, brooding over a prospect of future poverty."

There was a degree of probability in this picture that I could not gainsay, so we walked on in silence.

After turning from the main road up a narrow lane, so thickly shaded by forest trees as to give it a complete air of seclusion, we came in sight of the cottage. It was humble enough in its ap-

pearance for the most pastoral poet; and yet it had a pleasing rural look. A wild vine had overrun one end with a profusion of foliage; a few trees threw their branches gracefully over it; and I observed several pots of flowers tastefully disposed about the door, and on the grass plot in front. A small wicket gate opened upon a footpath that wound through some shrubbery to the door. Just as we approached, we heard the sound of music—Leslie grasped my arm; we paused and listened. It was Mary's voice singing in a style of the most touching simplicity, a little air of which her husband was peculiarly fond.

I felt Leslie's hand tremble on my arm. He stepped forward to hear more distinctly. His step made a noise on the gravel walk. A bright, beautiful face glanced out at the window and vanished—a light footstep was heard—and Mary came tripping forth to meet us: she was in a pretty rural dress of white; a few wild flowers were twisted in her fine hair; a fresh bloom was on her cheek; her whole countenance beamed with smiles—I had never seen her look so lovely.

"My dear George," cried she, "I am so glad you are come! I have been watching and watching for you; and running down the lane, and looking out for you. I've set out a table under a beautiful tree behind the cottage; and I've been gathering some of the most delicious strawberries, for I know you are fond of them—and we have such excellent cream—and every thing is so sweet and still here—Oh!" said she, putting her arm within his, and looking up brightly in his face, "Oh, we shall be so happy!"

Poor Leslie was overcome.—He caught he to his bosom—he folded his arms round her—h kissed her again and again—he could not speak but the tears gushed into his eyes; and h has often assured me that though the world ha since gone prosperously with him, and his life ha indeed, been a happy one, yet never has he ex perienced a moment of such unutterable felicity

THE BROKEN HEART.

I never heard
Of any true affection, but 'twas nipt
With care, that, like the caterpular, eats
The leaves of the spring's sweetest book, the rose.

MIDDLETON

It is a common practice with those who have outlived the susceptibility of early feeling, o have been brought up in the gay heartlessness o dissipated life, to laugh at all love stories, and t treat the tales of romantic passion as mere fic tions of novelists and poets. My observations o human nature have induced me to think other wise. They have convinced me, that howeve the surface of the character may be chilled an frozen by the cares of the world, or cultivate into mere smiles by the arts of society, still ther are dormant fires lurking in the depths of the coldest bosom, which, when once enkindled, be come impetuous, and are sometimes desolating in th effects. Indeed, I am a true believer in he [redacted] deity, and go to the full exent of his doc-

trines. Shall I confess it?—I believe in broken hearts, and the possibility of dying of disappointed love. I do not, however, consider it a malady often fatal to my own sex; but I firmly believe that it withers down many a lovely woman into an early grave.

Man is the creature of interest and ambition. His nature leads him forth into the struggle and bustle of the world. Love is but the embellishment of his early life, or a song piped in the intervals of the acts. He seeks for fame, for fortune, for space in the world's thought, and dominion over his fellow men. But a woman's whole life is a history of the affections. The heart is her world: it is there her ambition strives for empire; it is there her avarice seeks for hidden treasures. She sends forth her sympathies on adventure; she embarks her own soul in the traffic of affection; and if shipwrecked, her case is hopeless—for it is a bankruptcy of the heart.

To a man the disappointment of love may occasion some bitter pangs: it wounds some feelings of tenderness—it blasts some prospects of felicity; but he is an active being,—he can dissipate his thoughts in the whirl of varied occupation, or plunge into the tide of pleasure; or, if the scene of disappointment be too full of painful associations, he can shift his abode at will and, taking as it were the wings of the morning, can fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, and be at rest.

But woman's is comparatively a fixed, a secluded, and a meditative life. She is more the companion of her own thoughts and feelings; and

are turned to ministers of sorrow, where shall she look for consolation? Her lot is to be wooed and won; and if unhappy in her love, her heart is like some fortress that has been captured, and sacked, and abandoned, and left desolate.

How many bright eyes grow dim—how many soft cheeks grow pale—how many lovely forms fade away into the tomb, and none can tell the cause that blighted their loveliness! As the dove will clasp its wings to its side, and cover and conceal the arrow that is preying on its vitals, so it is the nature of woman to hide from the world the pangs of wounded affection. The love of a delicate female is always shy and silent. Even when fortunate, she scarcely breathes it to herself; but when otherwise, she buries it in the recesses of her bosom, and there lets it cower and brood among the ruins of her peace. With her the desire of the heart has failed. The great charm of existence is at an end. She neglects all the cheerful exercises which gladden the spirits, quicken the pulses, and send the tide of life in healthful currents through the veins. Her rest is broken—the sweet refreshment of sleep is poisoned by melancholy dreams—"dry sorrow drinks her blood," until her enfeebled frame sinks under the slightest external injury. Look for her, after a little while, and you find friendship weeping over her untimely grave, and wondering that one, who but lately glowed with all the radiance of health and beauty, should so speedily be brought down to "darkness and the worm." You will be told of some wintry chill, some casual indisposition that laid her low;—but no one knows the

mental malady that previously sapped her strength and made her so easy a prey to the spoiler.

She is like some tender tree, the pride and beauty of the grove; graceful in its form; bright in its foliage, but with the worm preying at its heart. We find it suddenly withering, when it should be most fresh and luxuriant. We see it drooping its branches to the earth, and shedding leaf by leaf: until, wasted and perished away, it falls even in the stillness of the forest; and as we muse over the beautiful ruin, we strive in vain to recollect the blast or thunderbolt that could have smitten it with decay.

I have seen many instances of women running to waste and self neglect, and disappearing gradually from the earth, almost as if they had been exhaled to heaven; and have repeatedly fancied, that I could trace their death through the various declensions of consumption, cold, debility, languor, melancholy, until I reached the first symptom of disappointed love. But an instance of the kind was lately told to me; the circumstances are well known in the country where they happened, and I shall but give them in the manner in which they were related.

Every one must recollect the tragical story of young E——, the Irish patriot; it was too touching to be soon forgotten. During the troubles in Ireland he was tried, condemned, and executed, on a charge of treason. His fate made a deep impression on public sympathy. He was so young—so intelligent—so generous—so brave—so every thing that we are apt to like in a young man. His conduct under trial, too, was so lofty

and intrepid. The noble indignation with which he repelled the charge of treason against his country—the eloquent vindication of his name and his pathetic appeal to posterity, in the hopeless hour of condemnation—all these entered deeply into every generous bosom, and even his enemies lamented the stern policy that dictated his execution.

But there was one heart, whose anguish it would be impossible to describe. In happier days and fairer fortunes, he had won the affections of a beautiful and interesting girl, the daughter of a late celebrated Irish barrister. She loved him with the disinterested fervour of a woman's first and early love. When every worldly maxim arrayed itself against him; when blasted in fortune, and disgrace and danger darkened around his name, she loved him the more ardently for his very sufferings. If, then, his fate could awaken the sympathy, even of his foes, what must have been the agony of her whose whole soul was occupied by his image! Let those tell who have had the portals of the tomb suddenly closed between them and the being they most loved on earth—who have sat at its threshold, as one shut out in a cold and lonely world, from whence all that was most lovely and loving had departed.

But then the horrors of such a grave! so frightful, so dishonored! There was nothing for memory to dwell on that could soothe the pang of separation—none of those tender, though melancholy circumstances that endear the parting scene—nothing to melt sorrow into those blessed tears,

it, like the dews of heaven, to revive the heart the parching hour of anguish.

To render her widowed situation more desolate, she had incurred her father's displeasure by her unfortunate attachment, and was an exile from the paternal roof. But could the sympathy and kind offices of friends have reached a spirit so shocked and driven in by horror, she would have experienced no want of consolation, for the Irish are a people of quick and generous sensibilities. The most delicate and cherishing attentions were paid her by families of wealth and distinction. She was led into society, and they tried by all kinds of occupation and amusement to dissipate her grief, and wean her from the tragical story of her loves. But it was all in vain. There are some strokes of calamity that scathe and scorch the soul—that penetrate to the vital seat of happiness—and blast it, never again to put forth bud or blossom. She never objected to frequent the haunts of pleasure, but she was as much alone there as in the depths of solitude. She walked about in a sad reverie, apparently unconscious of the world around her. She carried with her an inward woe that mocked at all the blandishments of friendship, and "heeded not the song of the charmer, charm he never so wisely."

The person who told me her story had seen her at a masquerade. There can be no exhibition of far-gone wretchedness more striking and painful than to meet it in such a scene. To find it wandering like a spectre, lonely and joyless, where all around is gay—to see it dressed out in the trappings of mirth, and looking so wan and

wo-begone, as if it had tried in vain to cheat the poor heart into a momentary forgetfulness of sorrow. After strolling through the splendid rooms and giddy crowd with an air of utter abstraction, she sat herself down on the steps of an orchestra, and looking about for some time with a vacant air, that showed her insensibility to the garish scene, she began, with the capriciousness of a sickly heart, to warble a little plaintive air. She had an exquisite voice; but on this occasion it was so simple, so touching, it breathed forth such a soul of wretchedness, that she drew a crowd mute and silent around her, and melted every one into tears.

The story of one so true and tender could not but excite great interest in a country remarkable for enthusiasm. It completely won the heart of a brave officer, who paid his addresses to her, and thought that one so true to the dead could not but prove affectionate to the living. She declined his attention, for her thoughts were irrevocably engrossed by the memory of her former lover. He, however, persisted in his suit. He solicited not her tenderness, but her esteem. He was assisted by her conviction of his worth, and her sense of her own destitute and dependent situation; for she was existing on the kindness of friends. In a word, he at length succeeded in gaining her hand, though with the solemn assurance, that her heart was unalterably another's.

He took her with him to Sicily, hoping that a change of scene might wear out the remembrance of early woes. She was an amiable and exemplary wife, and made an effort to be a happy one;

but nothing could cure the silent and devouring melancholy that had entered into her very soul. She wasted away in a slow, but hopeless decline, and at length sunk into the grave, the victim of a broken heart.

It was on her that Moore, the distinguished Irish poet, composed the following lines:—

She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,
And lovers around her are sighing:
But coldly she turns from their gaze, and weeps,
For her heart in his grave is lying.

She sings the wild songs of her dear native plains,
Every note which he loved awaking—
Ah! little they think, who delight in her strains,
How the heart of the minstrel is breaking!

He had lived for his love—for his country he died,
They were all that to life had entwined him—
Nor soon shall the tears of his country be dried,
Nor long will his love stay behind him!

Oh! make her a grave where the sunbeams rest,
When they promise a glorious morrow;
They'll shine o'er her sleep, like a smile from the west,
From her own loved island of sorrow!

THE WIDOW AND HER SON.

Pittie old age, within whose silver haires
Honour and reverence evermore have raign'd
MARLOWE'S TAMBURLAINE.

DURING my residence in the country, I used frequently to attend at the old village church. Its shadowy aisles, its mouldering monuments, its dark oaken panelling, all reverend with the gloom of departed years, seemed to fit it for the haunt of solemn meditation. A Sunday, too, in the country, is so holy in its repose; such a pensive quiet reigns over the face of nature, that every restless passion is charmed down, and we feel all the natural religion of the soul gently springing up within us.

"Sweet day, so pure, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky."

I do not pretend to claim the character of a devout man; but there are feelings that visit me in a country church, amid the beautiful serenity of nature, which I experience no where else; and if not a more religious, I think I am a better man on Sunday, than on any other day of the seven.

But in this church I felt myself continually thrown back upon the world by the frigidity and pomp of the poor worms around me. The only being [illegible] seemed thoroughly to feel the humble

and prostrate piety of the true Christian was a poor decrepid old woman, bending under the weight of years and infirmities. She bore the traces of something better than abject poverty. The lingerings of decent pride were visible in her appearance. Her dress, though humble in the extreme, was scrupulously clean. Some trivial respect, too, had been awarded her, for she did not take her seat among the village poor, but sat alone on the steps of the altar. She seemed to have survived all love, all friendship, all society; and to have nothing left her but the hopes of heaven. When I saw her feebly rising and bending her aged form in prayer; habitually conning her prayer-book, which her palsied hand and failing eyes would not permit her to read, but which she evidently knew by heart; I felt persuaded that the faltering voice of that poor woman arose to heaven far before the responses of the clerk, the swell of the organ, or the chanting of the choir.

I am fond of loitering about country churches, and this was so delightfully situated, that it frequently attracted me. It stood on a knoll, round which a small stream made a beautiful bend, and then wound its way through a long reach of soft meadow scenery. The church was surrounded by yew trees, which seemed almost coeval with itself. Its tall Gothic spire shot up lightly from among them, with rooks and crows generally wheeling about it. I was seated there one still sunny morning, watching two labourers who were digging a grave. They had chosen one of the most remote and neglected corners of the churchyard; where, from the number of nameless graves

around, it would appear that the indigent and friendless were huddled into the earth. I was told that the new made grave was for the only son of a poor widow. While I was meditating on the distinctions of worldly rank, which extend thus down into the very dust, the toll of the bell announced the approach of the funeral. They were the obsequies of poverty, with which pride had nothing to do. A coffin of the plainest materials, without pall or other covering, was borne by some of the villagers. The sexton walked before with an air of cold indifference. There were no mock mourners in the trappings of affected woe; but there was one real mourner who feebly tottered after the corpse. It was the aged mother of the deceased—the poor old woman whom I had seen seated on the steps of the altar. She was supported by a humble friend, who was endeavouring to comfort her. A few of the neighbouring poor had joined the train, and some children of the village were running hand in hand, now shouting with unthinking mirth, and now pausing to gaze, with childish curiosity, on the grief of the mourner.

As the funeral train approached the grave, the parson issued from the church porch, arrayed in the surplice, with prayer-book in hand, and attended by the clerk. The service, however, was a mere act of charity. The deceased had been destitute, and the survivor was penniless. It was shuffled through, therefore, in form, but coldly and unfeelingly. The well-fed priest moved but a few steps from the church door; his voice could scarce be heard at the grave; and never did I

hear the funeral service, that sublime and touching ceremony, turned into such a frigid mummery of words.

I approached the grave. The coffin was placed on the ground. On it were inscribed the name and age of the deceased—"George Somers, aged 26 years." The poor mother had been assisted to kneel down at the head of it. Her withered hands were clasped, as if in prayer, but I could perceive, by a feeble rocking of the body, and a convulsive motion of the lips, that she was gazing on the last relics of her son, with the yearnings of a mother's heart.

The service being ended, preparations were made to deposit the coffin in the earth. There was that bustling stir which breaks so harshly on the feelings of grief and affection; directions given in the cold tones of business; the striking of spades into sand and gravel; which, at the grave of those we love, is, of all sounds, the most withering. The bustle around seemed to waken the mother from a wretched reverie. She raised her glazed eyes, and looked about with a faint wildness. As the men approached with cords to lower the coffin into the grave, she wrung her hands and broke into an agony of grief. The poor woman who attended her took her by the arm, endeavouring to raise her from the earth, and to whisper something like consolation—"Nay, now—nay, now—don't take it so sorely to heart." She could only shake her head and wring her hands, as one not to be comforted.

As they lowered the body into the earth, the creaking of the cords seemed to agonize her; but

when, on some accidental obstruction, there was a justling of the coffin, all the tenderness of the mother burst forth; as if any harm could come to him who was far beyond the reach of worldly suffering.

I could see no more—my heart swelled into my throat—my eyes filled with tears—I felt as if I were acting a barbarous part in standing by and gazing idly on this scene of maternal anguish. I wandered to another part of the church yard, where I remained until the funeral train had dispersed.

When I saw the mother slowly and painfully quitting the grave, leaving behind her the remains of all that was dear to her on earth, and returning to silence and destitution, my heart ached for her. What, thought I, are the distresses of the rich! they have friends to soothe—pleasures to beguile—a world to divert and dissipate their griefs. What are the sorrows of the young! Their growing minds soon close above the wound—their elastic spirits soon rise beneath the pressure—their green and ductile affections soon twine around new objects. But the sorrows of the poor, who have no outward appliances to soothe—the sorrows of the aged, with whom life at best is but a wintry day, and who can look for no after-growth of joy—the sorrows of a widow, aged, solitary, destitute, mourning over an only son, the last solace of her years; these are indeed sorrows which make us feel the impotency of consolation.

It was some time before I left the church yard. On my way homeward I met with the woman

who had acted as comforter: she was just returning from accompanying the mother to her lonely habitation, and I drew from her some particulars connected with the affecting scene I had witnessed.

The parents of the deceased had resided in the village from childhood. They had inhabited one of the neatest cottages, and by various rural occupations, and the assistance of a small garden had supported themselves creditably and comfortably, and led a happy and a blameless life. They had one son, who had grown up to be the staff and pride of their age.—"Oh, Sir!" said the good woman, "he was such a likely lad, so sweet-tempered, so kind to every one around him, so dutiful to his parents! It did one's heart good, to see him of a Sunday, dressed out in his best, so tall, so straight, so cheery, supporting his old mother to church—for she was always fonder of leaning on George's arm, than on her good man's; and, poor soul, she might well be proud of him, for a finer lad there was not in the country round."

Unfortunately, the son was tempted, during a year of scarcity and agricultural hardship, to enter into the service of one of the small craft that plied on a neighbouring river. He had not been long in this employ when he was entrapped by a pressgang, and carried off to sea. His parents received tidings of his seizure, but beyond that they could learn nothing. It was the loss of their main prop. The father, who was already infirm, grew heartless and melancholy, and sunk into his grave. The widow, left lonely in her age and feebleness, could no longer support her-

self, and came upon the parish. Still there was a kind feeling toward her throghout the village, and a certain respect, as being one of the oldest inhabitants. As no one applied for the cottage, in which she had passed so many happy days, she was permitted to remain in it, where she lived solitary and almost helpless. The few wants of nature were chiefly supplied from the scanty productions of her little garden, which the neighbours would now and then cultivate for her. It was but a few days before the time at which these circumstances were told me, that she was gathering some vegetables for her repast, when she heard the cottage door which faced the garden suddenly open. A stranger came out, and seemed to be looking eagerly and wildly around. He was dressed in seamen's clothes, was emaciated and ghastly pale, and bore the air of one broken by sickness and hardships. He saw her, and hastened toward her, but his steps were faint and faultering; he sank on his knees before her, and sobbed like a child. The poor woman gazed upon him with a vacant and wandering eye— "Oh my dear, dear mother! don't you know your son? your poor boy George?" It was indeed the wreck of her once noble lad; who, shattered by wounds, by sickness and foreign imprisonment, had, at length, dragged his wasted limbs homeward, to repose among the scenes of his childhood.

I will not attempt to detail the particulars of such a meeting, where joy and sorrow were so completely blended: still he was alive! he was come home! he might yet live to comfort and

cherish her old age! Nature, however, was exhausted in him; and if any thing had been wanting to finish the work of fate, the desolation of his native cottage would have been sufficient. He stretched himself on the pallet on which his widowed mother had passed many a sleepless night, and he never rose from it again.

The villagers, when they heard that George Somers had returned, crowded to see him, offering every comfort and assistance that their humble means afforded. He was too weak, however, to talk—he could only look his thanks. His mother was his constant attendant; and he seemed unwilling to be helped by any other hand.

There is something in sickness that breaks down the pride of manhood; that softens the heart, and brings it back to the feelings of infancy. Who that has languished, even in advanced life, in sickness and despondency: who that has pined on a weary bed in the neglect and loneliness of a foreign land; but has thought on the mother "that looked on his childhood," that smoothed his pillow, and administered to his helplessness. Oh! there is an enduring tenderness in the love of a mother to a son that transcends all other affections of the heart. It is neither to be chilled by selfishness, nor daunted by danger, nor weakened by worthlessness, nor stifled by ingratitude. She will sacrifice every comfort to his convenience; she will surrender every pleasure to his enjoyment; she will glory in his fame, and exult in his prosperity;—and if adversity overtake him, he will be the dearer to her by misfortune; and if disgrace settle upon his name,

she will still love and cherish him in spite of his disgrace; and if all the world beside cast him off, she will be all the world to him.

Poor George Somers had known well what it was to be in sickness, and none to soothe—lonely and in prison, and none to visit him. He could not endure his mother from his sight: if she moved away, his eye would follow her. She would sit for hours by his bed, watching him as he slept. Sometimes he would start from a feverish dream, and look anxiously up until he saw her venerable form bending over him; when he would take her hand, lay it on his bosom, and fall asleep with the tranquillity of a child. In this way he died.

My first impulse on hearing this humble tale of affliction, was to visit the cottage of the mourner, and administer pecuniary assistance, and, if possible, comfort. I found, however, on enquiry, that the good feelings of the villagers had prompted them to do every thing that the case admitted; and as the poor know best how to console each other's sorrows, I did not venture to intrude.

The next Sunday I was at the village church; when, to my surprise, I saw the poor old woman tottering down the aisle to her accustomed seat on the steps of the altar.

She had made an effort to put on something like mourning for her son; and nothing could be more touching than this struggle between pious affection and utter poverty: a black riband or so —e faded black handkerchief, and one or two more such humble attempts to express by outward signs that grief which passes show. When

I looked round upon the storied monuments, the stately hatchments; the cold marble pomp, with which grandeur mourned magnificently over departed pride, and turned to this poor widow, bowed down by age and sorrow at the altar of her God, and offering up the prayers and praises of a pious, though broken heart, I felt that this living monument of real grief was worth them all.

I related her story to some of the wealthy members of the congregation, and they were moved by it. They exerted themselves to render her situation more comfortable, and to lighten her afflictions. It was, however, but smoothing a few steps to the grave. In the course of a Sunday or two after, she was missed from her usual seat at church; and before I left the neighbourhood I heard, with a feeling of satisfaction, that she had quietly breathed her last, and had gone to rejoin those she loved, in that world where sorrow is never known, and friends are never parted.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

When I behold, with deepe astonishment,
To famous Westminster how there resorte,
Living in brasse or stoney monyment,
The princes and the worthies of all sorte;
Doe not I see reformde nobilities
Without contempt, or pride, or ostentation,
And looke upon offenselesse majesty,
Naked of pompe or earthly domination?
And how a play-game of a painted stone,
Contents the quiet now and silent spirites,
Whome all the world which late they stood upon,
Could not content nor quench their appetites.
Life is a frost of cold felicitie.
And death the thaw of all our vanitie.

¶ CHRISTOLLRO'S EPIGRAMS, BY T. B. 1598.

On one of those sober and rather melancholy days, in the latter part of autumn, when the shadows of morning and evening almost mingle together, and throw a gloom over the decline of the year, I passed several hours in rambling about Westminster Abbey. There was something congenial to the season in the mournful magnificence of the old pile; and as I passed its threshold, it seemed like stepping back into the regions of antiquity and losing myself among the shades of former ages.

I entered from the inner court of Westminster school, through a long, low, vaulted passage, that had an almost subterranean look, being dimly lighted in one part by circular perforations in the massy walls. Through this dark avenue I had a

distant view of the cloisters, with the figure of an old verger, in his black gown, moving along their shadowy vaults, and seeming like a spectre from one of the neighbouring tombs. The approach to the abbey through these gloomy monastic remains prepares the mind for its solemn contemplation. The cloisters still retain something of the quiet and seclusion of former days. The grey walls are discoloured by damps, and crumbling with age; a coat of hoary moss has gathered over the inscriptions of the mural monuments, and obscured the death's heads, and other funereal emblems. The sharp touches of the chisel are gone from the rich tracery of the arches; the roses which adorned the key-stones have lost their leafy beauty; every thing bears marks of the gradual dilapidations of time, which yet has something touching and pleasing in its very decay.

The sun was pouring down a yellow autumnal ray into the square of the cloisters, beaming upon a scanty plot of grass in the centre, and lighting up an angle of the vaulted passage with a kind of dusty splendour. From between the arcades, the eye glanced up to a bit of blue sky or a passing cloud; and beheld the sun-gilt pinnacles of the abbey towering into the azure heaven.

As I paced the cloisters, sometimes contemplating this mingled picture of glory and decay, and sometimes endeavouring to decipher the inscriptions on the tombstones, which formed the pavement beneath my feet, my eye was attracted to three figures, rudely carved in relief, but nearly worn away by the footsteps of many generations. They were the effigies of three of the early

abbots; the epitaphs were entirely effaced; the names alone remained, having no doubt been renewed in later times. (Vitalis. Abbas. 1082, and Gislebertus Crispinus. Abbas. 1114, and Laurentius. Abbas. 1175.) I remained some little while musing over these casual relics of antiquity, thus left like wrecks upon this distant shore of time, telling no tale but that such beings had been and had perished; teaching no moral but the futility of that pride which hopes still to exact homage in its ashes, and to live in an inscription. A little longer, and even these faint records will be obliterated, and the monument will cease to be a memorial. Whilst I was yet looking down upon these grave-stones, I was roused by the sound of the abbey clock, reverberating from buttress to buttress, and echoing among the cloisters. It is almost startling to hear this warning of departed time sounding among the tombs, and telling the lapse of the hour, which, like a billow, has rolled us onwards towards the grave.

I pursued my walk to an arched door opening to the interior of the abbey. On entering here, the magnitude of the building breaks fully upon the mind, contrasted with the vaults of the cloisters. The eye gazes with wonder at clustered columns of gigantic dimensions, with arches springing from them to such an amazing height; and man wandering about their bases, shrunk into insignificance in comparison with his own handywork. The spaciousness and gloom of this vast edifice produce a profound and mysterious awe. We step cautiously and softly about, as if fearful of disturbing the hallowed silence of the tomb;

while every foot-fall whispers along the walls; and chatters among the sepulchres, making us more sensible of the quiet we have interrupted.

It seems as if the awful nature of the place presses down upon the soul, and hushes the beholder into noiseless reverence. We feel that we are surrounded by the congregated bones of the great men of past times, who have filled history with their deeds and the earth with their renown.

And yet it almost provokes a smile at the vanity of human ambition, to see how they are crowded together and justled in the dust; what parsimony is observed in doling out a scanty nook, a gloomy corner, a little portion of earth, to those, whom, when alive, kingdoms could not satisfy; and how many shapes, and forms, and artifices, are devised to catch the casual notice of the passenger, and save from forgetfulness, for a few short years, a name which once aspired to occupy ages of the world's thought and admiration.

I passed some time in Poet's Corner, which occupies an end of one of the transepts or cross aisles of the abbey. The monuments are generally simple; for the lives of literary men afford no striking themes for the sculptor. Shakspeare and Addison have statues erected to their memories; but the greater part have busts, medallions, and sometimes mere inscriptions. Notwithstanding the simplicity of these memorials, I have always observed that the visitors to the abbey remain longest about them. A kinder and fonder feeling takes place of that cold curiosity or vague admiration with which they gaze on the splendid

monuments of the great and the heroic. They linger about these as about the tombs of friends and companions: for indeed there is something of companionship between *the author and the reader.* Other men are known to posterity only through the medium of history, which is continually growing faint and obscure: but the intercourse between the author and his fellow-men is ever new, active, and immediate. He has lived for them more than for himself; he has sacrificed surrounding enjoyments and shut himself up from the delights of social life, that he might the more intimately commune with distant minds and distant ages. Well may the world cherish his renown; for it has been purchased, not by deeds of violence and blood, but by the diligent dispensation of pleasure. Well may posterity be grateful to his memory; for he has left it an inheritance, not of empty names and sounding actions, but whole treasures of wisdom, bright gems of thought, and golden veins of language.

From Poet's Corner I continued my stroll towards that part of the abbey which contains the sepulchres of the kings. I wandered among what once were chapels, but which are now ocers. I ied by the tombs and monuments of the great. umns of ery turn I met with some illustrious name; ng from th cognizance of some powerful house re- nan wander in history. As the eye darts into these nsignificance mbers of death, it catches glimpses of vork. The sp ies; some kneeling in niches, as if in diffe produce, thers stretched upon the tombs, with Ve step cautiously pressed together; warriors in ar- disturbing the hosing after battle; prelates with

roziers and mitres; and nobles in robes and coronets, lying as it were in state. In glancing over this scene, so strangely populous, yet where every form is so still and silent, it seems almost as if we were treading a mansion of that fabled city, where every being had been suddenly transmuted into stone.

I paused to contemplate a tomb on which lay the effigy of a knight in complete armour. A large buckler was on one arm; the hands were pressed together in supplication upon the breast; the face was almost covered by the morion; the legs were crossed in token of the warrior's having been engaged in the holy war. It was the tomb of a crusader; of one of those military enthusiasts, who so strangely mingled religion and romance, and whose exploits form the connecting link between fact and fiction; between the history and the fairy tale. There is something extremely picturesque in the tombs of these adventurers, decorated as they are with rude armorial bearings and gothic sculpture. They comport with the antiquated chapels in which they are generally found; and in considering them, the imagination is apt to kindle with the legendary associations, the romantic fictions, the chivalrous pomp and pageantry, which poetry has spread over the wars for the Sepulchre of Christ. They are the reliques of times utterly gone by; of beings passed from recollection; of customs and manners with which our's have no affinity. They are like objects from some strange and distant land, of which we have no certain knowledge, and about which all our conceptions

are vague and visionary. There is something extremely solemn and awful in those effigies on gothic tombs, extended as if in the sleep of death, or in the supplication of the dying hour. They have an effect infinitely more impressive on my feelings than the fanciful attitudes, the over-wrought conceits, and allegorical groups which abound on modern monuments. I have been struck, also, with the superiority of many of the old sepulchral inscriptions. There was a noble way, in former times, of saying things simply, and yet saying them proudly; and I do not know an epitaph that breathes a loftier consciousness of family worth and honourable lineage, than one which affirms, of a noble house, that "all the brothers were brave, and all the sisters virtuous."

In the opposite transept to Poet's Corner stands a monument which is among the most renowned achievements of modern art; but which to me appears horrible rather than sublime. It is the tomb of Mrs. Nightingale, by Roubillac. The bottom of the monument is represented as throwing open its marble doors, and a shrouded skeleton is starting forth. The shroud is falling from his fleshless frame as he launches his dart at his victim. She is sinking into her affrighted husband's arms, who strives, with vain and frantic effort, to avert the blow. The whole is executed with terrible truth and spirit; we almost fancy we hear the gibbering yell of triumph, bursting from the distended jaws of the spectre.—But why should we thus seek to clothe death with unnecessary terrors, and to spread horrors round the tomb of

those we love? The grave should be surrounded by every thing that might inspire tenderness and veneration for the dead; or that might win the living to virtue. It is the place, not of disgust and dismay, but of sorrow and meditation.

While wandering about those gloomy vaults and silent aisles, studying the records of the dead, the sound of busy existence from without occasionally reaches the ear;—the rumbling of the passing equipage; the murmur of the multitude; or perhaps the light laugh of pleasure. The contrast is striking with the death-like repose around: and it has a strange effect upon the feelings thus to hear the surges of active life hurrying along and beating against the very walls of the sepulchre.

I continued in this way to move from tomb to tomb, and from chapel to chapel. The day was gradually wearing away; the distant tread of loiterers about the abbey grew less and less frequent; the sun had poured his last ray through the lofty windows; the sweet-tongued bell was summoning to evening prayers; and I saw at a distance the choristers, in their white surplices, crossing the aisle and entering the choir. I stood before the entrance to Henry the Seventh's chapel. A flight of steps leads up to it, through a deep and gloomy, but magnificent arch. Great gates of brass, richly and delicately wrought turn heavily upon their hinges, as if proudly reluctant to admit the feet of common mortals into this most gorgeous of sepulchres.

On entering, the eye is astonished by the pomp of architecture, and the elaborate beauty of sculp-

turned detail. The very walls are wrought into universal ornament, encrusted with tracery, and scooped into niches, crowded with the statues of saints and martyrs. Stone seems, by the cunning labour of the chisel, to have been robbed of its weight and density, suspended aloft as if by magic, and the fretted roof achieved with the wonderful minuteness and airy security of a cobweb.

Along the sides of the chapel are the lofty stalls of the Knights of the Bath, richly carved, of oak, though with the grotesque decorations of Gothic architecture. On the pinnacles of the stalls are affixed the helmets and crests of the knights, with their scarfs and swords: above them are suspended their banners, emblazoned with armorial bearings, and contrasting the splendour of gold and purple and crimson, with the cold grey fretwork of the roof. In the midst of this grand mausoleum stands the sepulchre of its founder,—his effigy, with that of his queen, extended on a sumptuous tomb, and the whole surrounded by a lofty and superbly wrought brazen railing.

There is a sad dreariness in this magnificence; this strange mixture of tombs and trophies; these emblems of living and aspiring ambition, close beside mementos which show the dust and oblivion in which all must sooner or later terminate. Nothing impresses the mind with a deeper feeling of loneliness, than to tread the silent and deserted scene of former throng and pageant. On looking round on the vacant stalls of the knights and their esquires, and on the rows of dusty but gorgeous banners that were once borne before

them, my imagination conjured up the scene when this hall was bright with valour and beauty of the land; glittering with the splendour of jewelled rank and military array; alive with the tread of many feet and the hum of an admiring multitude. All had passed away; the silence of death had settled again upon the place; interrupted only by the casual chirping of birds which had found their way into the chapel, and built their nests among its friezes and pendants—sure signs of solitariness and desertion. When I read the names inscribed on the banners, they were those of men scattered far and wide about the world; some tossing upon distant seas; some under arms in distant lands; some mingling in the busy intrigues of courts and cabinets: all seeking to deserve more distinction in this mansion of shadowy honour: the melancholy reward of a monument.

Two small aisles on each side of this chapel present a touching instance of the equality of the grave; which brings down the oppressor to a level with the oppressed, and mingles the dust of the bitterest enemies together. In one is the sepulchre of the haughty Elizabeth, in the other is that of her victim, the lovely and unfortunate Mary. Not an hour in the day but some ejaculation of pity is uttered over the fate of the latter, mingled with indignation at her oppressor. The walls of Elizabeth's sepulchre continually echo with the sighs of sympathy heaved at the grave of her rival.

A peculiar melancholy reigns over the aisle where Mary lies buried. The light struggles

imly through windows darkened by dust. The reator part of the place is in deep shadow, and e walls are stained and tinted by time and eather. A marble figure of Mary is stretched pon the tomb, round which is an iron railing, uch corroded, bearing her national emblem—ne thistle. I was weary with my ramble and sat own to rest myself by the monument, revolving n my mind the chequered and disastrous story f poor Mary.

The sound of casual footsteps had ceased from he abbey. I could only hear, now and then he distant voice of the priest repeating the evening service, and the faint responses of the choir; hese paused for a time and all was hushed. The tillness, the desertion and obscurity that were radually prevailing around, gave a deeper and nore solemn interest to the place:

> For in the silent grave no conversation,
> No joyful tread of friends, no voice of lovers,
> No careful father's counsel—nothing's heard,
> For nothing is, but all oblivion,
> Dust and an endless darkness

Suddenly the notes of the deep labouring organ st upon the ear, falling with doubled and reoled intensity, and rolling, as it were, huge de mes of sound. How well do their volume and whic ur accord with this mighty building! With ing in omp do they swell through its vast vaults, loneli athe their awful harmony through these scenes death, and make the silent sepulchre oking And now they rise in triumphant accla- d their leaving higher and higher their accord- orgeous

ant notes, and piling sound on sound.—And now they pause, and the soft voices of the choir break out into sweet gushes of melody; they soar aloft, and warble along the roof, and seem to play about these lofty vaults like the pure airs of heaven. Again the pealing organ heaves its thrilling thunders, compressing air into music, and rolling it forth upon the soul. What long-drawn cadences! What solemn sweeping concords! It grows more and more dense and powerful—it fills the vast pile, and seems to jar the very walls—the ear is stunned—the senses are overwhelmed. And now it is winding up in full jubilee—it is rising from the earth to heaven—the very soul seems rapt away and floated upwards on this swelling tide of harmony!

I sat for some time lost in that kind of reverie which a strain of music is apt sometimes to inspire: the shadows of evening were gradually thickening around me; the monuments began to cast deeper and deeper gloom; and the distant clock again gave token of the slowly waning day.

I rose and prepared to leave the abbey. As I descended the flight of steps which lead into the body of the building, my eye was caught by the shrine of Edward the Confessor, and I ascended the small staircase that conducts to it, to take from thence a general survey of this wilderness of tombs. The shrine is elevated upon a kind of platform, and close around it are the sepulchres of various kings and queens. From this eminence the eye looks down between pillars and funeral trophies to the chapels and chambers below,

crowded with tombs; where warriors, prelates, courtiers, and statesmen lie mouldering in their "bed of darkness." Close by me stood the great chair of coronation, rudely carved of oak, in the barbarous taste of a remote and gothic age. The scene seemed almost as if contrived, with theatrical artifice, to produce an effect upon the beholder. Here was a type of the beginning and the end of human pomp and power; here it was literally but a step from the throne to the sepulchre. Would not one think that these incongruous mementos had been gathered together as a [illegible] to living greatness?—to show it, even in the moment of its proudest exaltation, the [illegible]t and dishonour to which it must soon arrive; how soon that crown which encircles its brow must pass away; and it must lie down in the dust and disgraces of the tomb, and be trampled upon by the feet of the meanest of the multitude? For, strange to tell, even the grave is here no longer a sanctuary. There is a shocking levity in some natures, which leads them to sport with awful and hallowed things; and there are base minds, which delight to revenge on the illustrious dead the abject homage and groveling servility which they pay to the living. The coffin of Edward the Confessor has been broken open, and his remains despoiled of their funeral ornaments: the sceptre has been stolen from the hand of the imperious Elizabeth, and the effigy of Henry the Fifth lies headless. Not a royal monument but bears some proof how false and fugitive is the homage of mankind. Some are

plundered; some mutilated; some covered with ribaldry and insult—all more or less outraged and dishonoured!

The last beams of day were now faintly streaming through the painted windows in the high vaults above me; the lower parts of the abbey were already wrapped in the obscurity of twilight. The chapels and aisles grew darker and darker. The effigies of the kings faded into shadows; the marble figures of the monuments assumed strange shapes in the uncertain light; the evening breeze crept through the aisles like the cold breath of the grave; and even the distant footfall of a verger, traversing the Poet's Corner, had something strange and dreary in its sound. I slowly retraced my morning's walk, and as I passed out at the portal of the cloisters, the door, closing with a jarring noise behind me, filled the whole building with echoes.

I endeavoured to form some arrangement in my mind of the objects I had been contemplating, but found they were already falling into indistinctness and confusion. Names, inscriptions, trophies, had all become confounded in my recollection, though I had scarcely taken my foot from off the threshold. What, thought I, is this vast assemblage of sepulchres but a treasury of humiliation; a huge pile of reiterated homilies on the emptiness of renown, and the certainty of oblivion! It is, indeed, the empire of death; his great shadowy palace; where he sits in state, mocking at the reliques of human glory, and spreading dust and forgetfulness on the monuments of princes. How idle a boast, after all, is

the immortality of a name! Time is ever silently turning over his pages; we are too much engrossed by the story of the present, to think of the characters and anecdotes that gave interest to the past; and each age is a volume thrown aside to be speedily forgotten. The idol of to-day pushes the hero of yesterday out of our recollection; and will, in turn, be supplanted by his successor of to-morrow, "Our fathers," says Sir Thomas Brown, "find their graves in our short memories, and sadly tell us how we may be buried in our survivors." History fades into fable; fact becomes clouded with doubt and controversy; the inscription moulders from the tablet; the statue falls from the pedestal. Columns, arches, pyramids, what are they but heaps of sand; and their epitaphs, but characters written in the dust? What is the security of a tomb, or the perpetuity of an embalmment? the remains of Alexander the Great have been scattered to the wind, and his empty sarcophagus is now the mere curiosity of a museum. "The Egyptian mummies, which Cambyses or time hath spared, avarice now consumeth; Mizraim cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams."*

What then is to insure this pile which now towers above me from sharing the fate of mightier mausoleums? The time must come when its gilded vaults, which now spring so loftily, shall lie in [illegible]ish beneath the feet; when, instead of the sound of melody and praise, the wind shall whistle through the broken arches, and the owl hoot from the shattered tower—when the garish

* Sir T. Brown.

beam shall break into these gloomy mansions of death; and the ivy twine round the fallen column; and the fox-glove hang its blossoms about the nameless urn, as if in mockery of the dead. Thus man passes away; his name perishes from record and recollection; his history is as a tale that is told, and his very monument becomes a ruin.

IRVING.

THE MUTABILITY OF LITERATURE.

A COLLOQUY IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

I know that all beneath the moon decays,
And what by mortals in this world is brought,
In time's great periods shall return to nought.
I know that all the muse's heavenly layes,
With toil of sprite which are so dearly bought,
As idle sounds, of few or none are sought,
That there is nothing lighter than mere praise.

DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN.

THERE are certain half-dreaming moods of mind, in which we naturally steal away from noise and glare, and seek some quiet haunt, where we may indulge our reveries and build our air castles undisturbed. In such a mood I was loitering about the old gray cloisters of Westminster Abbey, enjoying that luxury of wandering thought which one is apt to dignify with the name of reflection; when suddenly an irruption of mad-cap boys from Westminster School, playing at football, broke in upon the monastic stillness of the

place, making the vaulted passages and mouldering tombs echo with their merriment. I sought to take refuge from their noise by penetrating still deeper into the solitudes of the pile, and applied to one of the vergers for admission to the library. He conducted me through a portal rich with the crumbling sculpture of former ages, which opened upon a gloomy passage leading to the Chapter-house and the chamber in which Doomsday-Book is deposited. Just within the passage is a small door on the left. To this the verger applied a key; it was double locked, and opened with some difficulty, as if seldom used. We now ascended a dark narrow staircase, and passing through a second door, entered the library.

I found myself in a lofty antique hall, the roof supported by massive joists of old English oak. It was soberly lighted by a row of Gothic windows at a considerable height from the floor, and which apparently opened upon the roofs of the cloisters. An ancient picture of some reverend dignitary of the church in his robes hung over the fire-place. Around the hall and in a small gallery were the books, arranged in carved oaken cases. They consisted principally of old polemical writers, and were much more worn by time than use. In the centre of the library was a solitary table with two or three books on it, an inkstand without ink, and a few pens parched by long disuse. The place seemed fitted for quiet study and profound meditation. It was buried deep among the massive walls of the abbey, and shut up from the tumult of the world. I could

only hear now and then the shouts of the school-boys faintly swelling from the cloisters, and the sound of a bell tolling for prayers, that echoed soberly along the roofs of the abbey. By degrees the shouts of merriment grew fainter and fainter, and at length died away. The bell ceased to toll, and a profound silence reigned through the dusky hall.

I had taken down a little thick quarto, curiously bound in parchment, with brass clasps, and seated myself at the table in a venerable elbow-chair. Instead of reading, however, I was beguiled by the solemn monastic air, and lifeless quiet of the place, into a train of musing. As I looked around upon the old volumes in their mouldering covers, thus ranged on the shelves, and apparently never disturbed in their repose, I could not but consider the library a kind of literary catacomb, where authors, like mummies, are piously entombed, and left to blacken and moulder in dusty oblivion.

How much, thought I, has each of these volumes, now thrust aside with such indifference, cost some aching head! how many weary days! how many sleepless nights! How have their authors buried themselves in the solitude of cells and cloisters; shut themselves up from the face of man, and the still more blessed face of nature; and devoted themselves to painful research and intense reflection! And all for what? to occupy an inch of dusty shelf—to have the title of their works read now and then in a future age, by some drowsy churchman or casual straggler like myself; and in another age to be lost, even to

remembrance. Such is the amount of this boasted immortality. A mere temporary rumour, a local sound; like the tone of that bell which has just tolled among these towers, filling the ear for a moment—lingering transiently in echo—and then passing away like a thing that was not!

While I sat half murmuring, half meditating these unprofitable speculations, with my head resting on my hand, I was thrumming with the other hand upon the quarto, until I accidentally loosened the clasps; when, to my utter astonishment, the little book gave two or three yawns, like one awaking from a deep sleep; then a husky hem; and at length began to talk. At first its voice was very hoarse and broken, being much troubled by a cobweb which some studious spider had woven across it; and having probably contracted a cold from long exposure to the chills and damps of the abbey. In a short time, however, it became more distinct, and I soon found it an exceedingly fluent, conversable little tome. Its language, to be sure, was rather quaint and obsolete, and its pronunciation, what, in the present day, would be deemed barbarous; but I shall endeavour, as far as I am able, to render it in modern parlance.

It began with railings about the neglect of the world—about merit being suffered to languish in obscurity, and other such common-place topics of literary repining, and complained bitterly that it had not been opened for more than two centuries; that the Dean only looked now and then into the library, sometimes took down a volume or two, trifled with them for a few moments, and

then returned them to their shelves. "What a plague do they mean," said the little quarto, which I began to perceive was somewhat choleric, "what a plague do they mean by keeping several thousand volumes of us shut up here, and watched by a set of old vergers, like so many beauties in a harem, merely to be looked at now and then by the Dean? Books were written to give pleasure and to be enjoyed; and I would have a rule passed that the Dean should pay each of us a visit at least once a year; or if he is not equal to the task, let them, once in a while turn loose the whole school of Westminster among us, that at any rate we may now and then have an airing."

"Softly, my worthy friend," replied I; "you are not aware how much better you are off than most books of your generation. By being stored away in this ancient library, you are like the treasured remains of those saints and monarchs which lie enshrined in the adjoining chapels; while the remains of their contemporary mortals, left to the ordinary course of nature, have long since returned to dust."

"Sir," said the little tome, ruffling his leaves and looking big, "I was written for all the world, not for the bookworms of an abbey. I was intended to circulate from hand to hand, like other great contemporary works; but here have I been clasped up for more than two centuries, and might have silently fallen a prey to these worms that are playing the very vengeance with my intestines, if you had not by chance given me an opportunity of uttering a few last words before I go to pieces."

"My good friend," rejoined I, "had you been left to the circulation of which you speak, you would long ere this have been no more. To judge from your physiognomy, you are now well stricken in years: very few of your contemporaries can be at present in existence; and those few owe their longevity to being immured like yourself in old libraries; which suffer me to add, instead of likening to harems, you might more properly and gratefully have compared to those infirmaries attached to religious establishments, for the benefit of the old and decrepid, and where by quiet fostering and no employment, they often endure to an amazingly good-for-nothing old age. You talk of your contemporaries as if in circulation—where do you meet with their works? what do we hear of Robert Groteste of Lincoln? No one could have toiled harder than he for immortality. He is said to have written nearly two hundred volumes. He built, as it were, a pyramid of books to perpetuate his name; but, alas! the pyramid has long since fallen, and only a few fragments are scattered in various libraries, where they are scarcely disturbed even by the antiquarian. What do we hear of Giraldus Cambrensis, the historian, antiquarian, philosopher, theologian, and poet? He declined two bishoprics that he might shut himself up and write for posterity; but posterity never enquires after his labours. What of Henry of Huntingdon, who, beside a learned History of England, wrote a treatise on the contempt of the world, which the world has revenged by forgetting him? What is quoted of Joseph of Exeter, styled the

miracle of his age in classical composition? Of his three great heroic poems one is lost for ever, excepting a mere fragment: the others are known only to a few of the curious in literature; and as to his love verses and epigrams, they have entirely disappeared. What is in current use, of John Wallis, the Franciscan, who acquired the name of the tree of life? Of William of Malmsbury; of Simeon of Durham; of Benedict of Peterborough; of John Hanvil of St. Albans; of ——"

"Prithee, friend," cried the quarto, in a testy tone, "how old do you think me? You are talking of authors that lived long before my time, and wrote either in Latin or French, so that they in a manner expatriated themselves, and deserved to be forgotten;* but I, Sir, was ushered into the world from the press of the renowned Wynkyn de Worde. I was written in my own native tongue, at a time when that language had become fixed; and indeed I was considered a model of pure and elegant English."

(I should observe that these remarks were couched in such intolerably antiquated terms, that I have had infinite difficulty in rendering them into modern phraseology.)

"I cry your mercy," said I, "for mistaking your age; but it matters little; almost all the writers of your time have likewise passed into forgetfulness; and De Worde's publications are

* In Latin and French hath many soueraine witte had great delyte to endite, and have many noble things fulfilde, but certes there ben some that speaken their poisye in French, of which speeche the Frenchmen have as good a fantasye as we have in hearyng of Frenchmen's Englishe.—*Chaucer's Testament of Love.*

mere literary rarities among book-collectors. The purity and stability of language, too, on which you found your claims to perpetuity, have been the fallacious dependence of authors of every age, even back to the times of the worthy Robert of Gloucester, who wrote his history in rhymes of mongrel Saxon.* Even now, many talk of Spenser's "well of pure English undefiled," as if the language ever sprang from a well or fountain head, and was not rather a mere confluence of various tongues, perpetually subject to changes and intermixtures. It is this which has made English literature so extremely mutable, and the reputation built upon it so fleeting. Unless thought can be committed to something more permanent and unchangeable than such a medium, even thought must share the fate of every thing else, and fall into decay. This should serve as a check upon the vanity and exultation of the most popular writer. He finds the language in which he has embarked his fame gradually altering, and subject to the dilapidations of time, and the caprice of fashion. He looks back and beholds the early authors of his country, once the favourites of their day, supplanted by modern writers. A few short ages have covered them with obscurity, and their

* Holinshed, in his Chronicle, observes, "Afterwards, also, by diligent travell of Geffry Chaucer and of John Gowre, in the time of Richard the Second, and after them of John Scogan and John Lydgate, monke of Berrie, our said toong was brought to an excellent passe, not withstanding that it never came unto the type of perfection until the time of Queen Elizabeth, wherein John Jewell, Bishop of Sarum, John Fox, and sundrie learned and excellent writers, have fully accomplished the ornature of the same, to their great praise and immortal commendation."

merits can only be relished by the quaint taste of the bookworm. And such, he anticipates, will be the fate of his own work, which, however it may be admired in its day, and held up as a model of purity, will in the course of years grow antiquated and obsolete; until it should become almost as unintelligible in its native land, as an Egyptian obelisk, or one of those Runic inscriptions said to exist in the deserts of Tartary. I declare," added I, with some emotion, "when I contemplate a modern library, filled with new works in all the bravery of rich gilding and binding, I feel disposed to sit down and weep; like the good Xerxes when he surveyed his army, pranked out in all the splendour of military array, and reflected that in one hundred years not one of them would be in existence!"

"Ah," said the little quarto, with a heavy sigh, "I see how it is; these modern scribblers have superseded all the good old authors. I suppose nothing is read now-a-days but Sir Philip Sydney's Arcadia, Sackville's stately plays, and Mirror for Magistrates, or, the fine-spun Euphuisms of the unparalleled John Lyly."

"There you are again mistaken," said I, "the writers whom you suppose in vogue, because they happened to be so when you were last in circulation, have long since had their day. Sir Philip Sydney's Arcadia, the immortality of which was so fondly predicted by his admirers,* and

* Live ever sweete booke, the simple image of his gentle witt, and the golden pillar of his noble courage; and eves notify unto the world that thy writer was the secretary of eloquence, the breath of the muses, the honey bee of the daintiest flowers of witt and arte, the pith of morale and intellectual vertues, the arme of Bellona in the

which, in truth, is full of noble thoughts, delicate images, and graceful turns of language, is now scarcely ever mentioned. Sackville has strutted into obscurity; and even Lyly, though his writings were once the delight of a court, and apparently perpetuated by a proverb, is now scarcely known even by name. A whole crowd of authors who wrote and wrangled at the time, have likewise gone down, with all their writings and their controversies. Wave after wave of succeeding literature has rolled over them, until they are buried so deep, that it is only now and then that some industrious diver after fragments of antiquity brings up a specimen for the gratification of the curious.

"For my part," I continued, "I consider this mutability of language a wise precaution of Providence for the benefit of the world at large, and of authors in particular. To reason from analogy: we daily behold the varied and beautiful tribes of vegetables springing up, flourishing, adorning the fields for a short time, and then fading into dust, to make way for their successors. Were not this the case, the fecundity of nature would be a grievance instead of a blessing. The earth would groan with rank and excessive vegetation, and its surface become a tangled wilderness. In like manner the works of genius and learning decline and make way for subsequent productions. Language gradually varies, and with it fade away the writings of authors who

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field, the tongue of Guada in the chamber, the sprite of Practise in [illegible], and the paragon of excellency in print.

HARLEY'S PIERCE'S SUPEREROGATION.

have flourished their allotted time; otherwise, the creative powers of genius would overstock the world, and the mind would be completely bewildered in the endless mazes of literature. Formerly there were some restraints on this excessive multiplication. Works had to be transcribed by hand, which was a slow and laborious operation: they were written either on parchment, which was expensive, so that one work was often erased to make way for another; or on papyrus, which was fragile and extremely perishable. Authorship was a limited and unprofitable craft, pursued chiefly by monks in the leisure and solitude of their cloisters. The accumulation of manuscripts was slow and costly, and confined almost entirely to monasteries. To these circumstances it may, in some measure, be owing that we have not been inundated by the intellect of antiquity; that the fountains of thought have not been broken up, and modern genius drowned in the deluge. But the inventions of paper and the press have put an end to all these restraints. They have made every one a writer, and enabled every mind to pour itself into print, and diffuse itself over the whole intellectual world. The consequences are alarming. The stream of literature has swoln into a torrent—augmented into a river—expanded into a sea. A few centuries since, five or six hundred manuscripts constituted a great library; but what would you say to libraries such as actually exist, containing three and four hundred thousand volumes; legions of authors at the same time busy; and the press going on with fearfully increasing activity, to

double and quadruple the number? Unless some unforeseen mortality should break out among the progeny of the Muse, now that she has become so prolific, I tremble for posterity. I fear the mere fluctuation of language will not be sufficient. Criticism may do much. It increases with the increase of literature, and resembles one of those salutary checks on population spoken of by economists. All possible encouragement, therefore, should be given to the growth of critics, good or bad. But I fear all will be in vain; let criticism do what it may, writers will write, printers will print, and the world will inevitably be overstocked with good books. It will soon be the employment of a lifetime merely to learn their names. Many a man of passable information, at the present day, reads scarcely any thing but Reviews; and before long a man of erudition will be little better than a mere walking catalogue."

"My very good sir," said the little quarto, yawning most drearily in my face, "excuse my interrupting you, but I perceive you are rather given to prose. I would ask the fate of an author who was making some noise just as I left the world. His reputation, however, was considered quite temporary. The learned shook their heads at him, for he was a poor half-educated varlet, that knew little of Latin, and nothing of Greek, and had been obliged to run the country for deer-stealing. I think his name was Shakspeare. I presume he soon sunk into oblivion."

"On the contrary," said I, "it is owing to that very man that the literature of his period

as experienced a duration beyond the ordinary rm of English literature. There rise authors ow and then, who seem proof against the muta- ility of language, because they have rooted emselves in the unchanging principles of hu- an nature. They are like gigantic trees that e sometimes see on the banks of a stream; hich, by their vast and deep roots, penetrating hrough the mere surface, and laying hold on the ery foundations of the earth, preserve the soil round them from being swept away by the verflowing current, and hold up many a neigh- ouring plant, and, perhaps, worthless weed, to erpetuity. Such is the case with Shakspeare, whom we behold defying the encroachments of ime, retaining in modern use the language and iterature of his day, and giving duration to many n indifferent author, merely from having flour- shed in his vicinity. But even he, I grieve to say, s gradually assuming the tint of age, and his whole form is over-run by a profusion of com- nentators, who, like clambering vines and creep- rs, almost bury the noble plant that upholds hem."

Here the little quarto began to heave his sides nd chuckle, until at length he broke out in a lethoric fit of laughter that had well nigh chok- d him, by reason of his excessive corpulency. "Mighty well!" cried he, as soon as he could ecover breath, "mighty well! and so you would ersuade me that the literature of an age is to be erpetuated by a vagabond deer-stealer! by a man ithout learning: by a poet, forsooth—a poet!" And here he wheezed forth another fit of laughter.

I confess that I felt somewhat nettled at this rudeness, which I ascribed to his having flourished in a less polished age. I determined, nevertheless, not to give up my point.

"Yes," resumed I, positively, "a poet; for of all writers he has the best chance for immortality. Others may write from the head, but he writes from the heart, and the heart will always understand him. He is the faithful portrayer of nature, whose features are always the same, and always interesting. Prose writers are voluminous and unwieldy; their pages crowded with common-places, and their thoughts expanded into tediousness. But with the true poet every thing is terse, touching, or brilliant. He gives the choicest thoughts in the choicest language. He illustrates them by every thing that he sees most striking in nature and art. He enriches them by pictures of human life, such as it is passing before him. His writings, therefore, contain the spirit, the aroma, if I may use the phrase, of the age in which he lives. They are caskets which enclose within a small compass the wealth of the language—its family jewels, which are thus transmitted in a portable form to posterity. The setting may occasionally be antiquated, and require now and then to be renewed, as in the case of Chaucer; but the brilliancy and intrinsic value of the gems continue unaltered. Cast a look back over the long reach of literary history. What vast valleys of dulness, filled with monkish legends and academical controversies! What bogs of theological speculations; what dreary wastes of metaphysics! Here and there only do

we behold the heaven-illumined bards, elevated like beacons on their widely-separated heights, to transmit the pure light of poetical intelligence from age to age!"*

I was just about to launch forth into eulogiums upon the poets of the day, when the sudden opening of the door caused me to turn my head. It was the verger, who came to inform me that it was time to close the library. I sought to have a parting word with the quarto, but the worthy little tome was silent; the clasps were closed; and it looked perfectly unconscious of all that had passed. I have been to the library two or three times since, and endeavoured to draw it into further conversation, but in vain; and whether all this rambling colloquy actually took place, or whether it was another of those odd day-dreams to which I am subject, I have never to this moment been able to discover.

IRVING.

Thorow earth and waters deepe,
The pen by skill doth passe:
And featly nyps the worldes abuse,
And shoes us in a glasse,
The vertu and the vice
Of every wight alyve;
The honey-comb that bee doth make
Is not so sweete in hyve,
As are the golden leves
That drops from poets head;
Which doth surmount our common talke
As farre as dross doth lead.

Churchyard.

AN ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

Written in the year 1709.

I.

'Tis hard to say, if greater want of skill
Appear in writing or in judging ill;
But, of the two, less dangerous is the offence
To tire our patience, than mislead our sense
Some few in that, but numbers err in this,
Ten censure wrong for one who writes amiss:
A fool might once himself alone expose,
Now one in verse makes many more in prose.
'Tis with our judgments as our watches; none
Go just alike, yet each believes his own.
In poets as true genius is but rare,
True taste as seldom is the critics' share;
Both must alike from Heaven derive their light,
These born to judge, as well as those to write.
Let such teach others who themselves excel
And censure freely who have written well,
Authors are partial to their wit, 'tis true,
But are not critics to their judgment too?
Yet if we look more closely, we shall find
Most have the seeds of judgment in their mind:
Nature affords at least a glimmering light;
The lines, though touch'd but faintly, are drawn right.
But as the slightest sketch, if justly traced,
Is by ill colouring but the more disgraced,
So by false learning is good sense defaced:

Some are bewilder'd in the maze of schools;
And some made coxcombs nature meant but fools.
In search of wit these lose their common sense,
And then turn critics in their own defence.
Each burns, alike, who can, or cannot write,
Or with a rival's or a eunuch's spite.
All fools have still an itching to deride,
And fain would be upon the laughing side.
If Mævius scribble in Apollo's spite;
There are who judge still worse than he can write.
Some have at first for wits, then poets pass'd,
Turn'd critics next, and proved plain fools at last.
Some neither can for wits nor critics pass,
As heavy mules are neither horse nor ass.
Those half-learn'd witlings, numerous in our isle,
As half-form'd insects on the banks of Nile;
Unfinish'd things, one knows not what to call,
Their generation's so equivocal:
To tell them, would a hundred tongues require,
Or one vain wit's, that might a hundred tire.
But you who seek to give and merit fame,
And justly bear a critic's noble name,
Be sure yourself and your own reach to know,
How far your genius, taste, and learning go;
Launch not beyond your depth, but be discreet,
And mark that point where sense and dulness meet.
Nature to all things fix'd the limits fit,
And wisely curb'd proud man's pretending wit.
As on the land while here the ocean gains,
In other parts it leaves wide sandy plains;
Thus in the soul while memory prevails,
The solid power of understanding fails;

Without all these at once before your eyes,
Cavil you may, but never criticise.
Be Homer's works your study and delight,
Read them by day, and meditate by night;
Thence form your judgment, thence your maxims bring,
And trace the Muses upward to their spring.
Still with itself compared, his text peruse;
And let your comment be the Mantuan muse.

When first young Maro in his boundless mind
A work to outlast immortal Rome design'd,
Perhaps he seem'd above the critic's law,
And but from nature's fountain scorn'd to draw:
But when to examine every part he came,
Nature and Homer were, he found, the same.
Convinced, amazed, he checks the bold design:
And rules as strict his labour'd work confine,
As if the Stagirite o'erlook'd each line.
Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem;
To copy nature is to copy them.

Some beauties yet no precepts can declare,
For there's a happiness as well as care.
Music resembles poetry: in each
Are nameless graces which no methods teach,
And which a master-hand alone can reach.
If, where the rules not far enough extend,
(Since rules were made but to promote their end)
Some lucky licence answer to the full
The intent proposed, that licence is a rule.
Thus Pegasus, a nearer way to take,
May boldly deviate from the common track.
Great wits sometimes may gloriously offend,
And rise to faults true critics dare not mend.

From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,
And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art,
Which, without passing through the judgment, gains,
The heart, and all its end at once attains.
In prospects thus, some objects please our eyes,
Which out of nature's common order rise,
The shapeless rock, or hanging precipice.
But though the ancients thus their rules invade,
(As kings dispense with laws themselves have made
Moderns, beware! or if you must offend,
Against the precept, ne'er transgress its end;
Let it be seldom, and compell'd by need:
And have, at least, their precedent to plead.
The critic else proceeds without remorse,
Seizes your fame, and puts his laws in force.
I know there are, to whose presumptuous thoughts,
Those freer beauties, even in them, seem faults.
Some figures monstrous and misshaped appear,
Consider'd singly, or beheld too near,
Which, but proportion'd to their light, or place,
Due distance reconciles to form and grace.
A prudent chief not always must display
His powers, in equal ranks, and fair array,
But with the occasion, and the place comply,
Conceal his force, nay seem sometimes to fly.
Those oft are stratagems which errors seem,
Nor is it Homer nods, but we that dream.
Still green with bays each ancient altar stands,
Above the reach of sacrilegious hands,
Secure from flames, from envy's fiercer rage,
Destructive war, and all-involving age.
See from each clime the learn'd their incense bring!
Hear, in all tongues consenting pæans ring!

In praise so just let every voice be join'd,
And fill the general chorus of mankind.
Hail! bards triumphant! born in happier days;
Immortal heirs of universal praise!
Whose honours with increase of ages grow,
As streams roll down, enlarging as they flow;
Nations unborn your mighty names shall sound,
And worlds applaud that must not yet be found!
O may some spark of your celestial fire,
The last, the meanest of your sons inspire,
(That on weak wings, from far, pursues your flights;
Glows while he reads, but trembles as he writes)
To teach vain wits a science little known,
To admire superior sense, and doubt their own!

II.

Of all the causes which conspire to blind
Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,
What the weak head with strongest bias rules,
Is *pride*, the never-failing vice of fools.
Whatever nature has in worth denied,
She gives in large recruits of needful pride;
For as in bodies, thus in souls, we find
What wants in blood and spirits, swell'd with wind:
Pride, where wit fails, steps in to our defence,
And fills up all the mighty void of sense.
If once right reason drives that cloud away,
Truth breaks upon us with resistless day.
Trust not yourself; but your defects to know,
Make use of every friend—and every foe.
A *little learning* is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:

There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fired at first sight with what the Muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of arts,
While from the bounded level of our mind,
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;
But more advanced, behold with strange surprise
New distant scenes of endless science rise!
So pleased at first the towering Alps we try,
Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky!
The eternal snows appear already pass'd,
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last:
But those attain'd, we tremble to survey
The growing labours of the lengthen'd way,
The increasing prospect tires our wandering eyes,
Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!

A perfect judge will read each work of wit
With the same spirit that its author writ:
Survey the WHOLE, nor seek slight faults to find
Where nature moves, and rapture warms the mind;
Nor lose for that malignant dull delight,
The generous pleasure to be charm'd with wit.
But in such lays as neither ebb nor flow,
Correctly cold, and regularly low,
That shunning faults, one quiet tenor keep,
We cannot blame indeed—but we may sleep.
In wit, as nature, what affects our hearts
Is not the exactness of peculiar parts;
'Tis not a lip or eye, we beauty call,
But the joint force and full result of all.
Thus when we view some well-proportioned dome,
(The world's just wonder, and even thine, O Rome!)

No single parts unequally surprise,
All comes united to the admiring eyes;
No monstrous height, or breadth, or length appear;
The whole at once is bold, and regular.
Whoeve thinks a faultless piece to see,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.
In every work regard the writer's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend;
And if the means be just, the conduct true,
Applause, in spite of trivial faults, is due
As men of breeding, sometimes men of wit,
To avoid great errors, must the less commit:
Neglect the rules each verbal critic lays,
For not to know some trifles, is a praise.
Most critics, fond of some subservient art,
Still make the whole depend upon a part;
They talk of principles, but notions prize,
And all to one loved folly sacrifice.
Once on a time, La Mancha's knight, they say,
A certain bard encountering on the way,
Discoursed in terms as just, with looks as sage,
As e'er could Dennis, of the Grecian stage;
Concluding all were desperate sots and fools,
Who durst depart from Aristotle's rules.
Our author, happy in a judge so nice,
Produced his play, and begg'd the knight's advice;
Made him observe the subject, and the plot,
The manners, passions, unities; what not?
All which, exact to rule, were brought about
Were but a combat in the lists left out.
"What! leave the combat out?" exclaims the knight;
Yes, or we must renounce the Stagirite.

" Not so, by Heav'n" (he answers in a rage)
" Knights, squires, and steeds, must enter on the stage."
So vast a throng the stage can ne'er contain.
" Then build a new, or act it in a plain."
Thus critics of less judgment than caprice,
Curious not knowing, not exact but nice,
Form short ideas; and offend in arts
(As most in manners) by a love to parts.

Some to *conceit* alone their taste confine,
And glittering thoughts struck out at every line;
Pleased with a work where nothing's just or fit;
One glaring chaos and wild heap of wit.
Poets, like painters, thus, unskill'd to trace
The naked nature and the living grace,
With gold and jewels cover every part,
And hide with ornaments their want of art.
True wit is nature to advantage dress'd;
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd;
Something, whose truth convinced at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind.
As shades more sweetly recommend the light,
So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit;
For works may have more wit than does them good,
As bodies perish through excess of blood.

Others for *language* all their care express,
And value books, as women men, for dress:
Their praise is still,—the style is excellent;
The sense, they humbly take upon content.
Words are like leaves; and where they most abound
Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found:
False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
Its gaudy colours spreads on every place;

The face of nature we no more survey,
All glares alike, without distinction gay :
But true expression, like the unchanging sun,
Clears and improves, whate'er it shines upon,
It gilds all objects, but it alters none.
Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent, as more suitable ;
A vile conceit in pompous words express'd
Is like a clown in regal purple dress'd .
For *different* styles with different subjects sort,
As several garbs with country, town, and court
Some by old words to fame have made pretence,
Ancients in phrase, mere moderns in their sense :
Such labour'd nothings, in so strange a style,
Amaze the unlearn'd and make the learned smile.
Unlucky, as Fungoso in the play,
These sparks with awkward vanity display
What the fine gentleman wore yesterday ;
And but so mimic ancient wits at best,
As apes our grandsires, in their doublets drest.
In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold ;
Alike fantastic, if too new, or old :
Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

But most by numbers judge a poet's song,
And smooth or rough, with them, is right or wrong :
In the bright Muse, though thousand charms conspire,
Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire ;
Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,
Not mend their minds ; as some to church repair,
Not for the doctrine, but the music there.

These equal syllables alone require,
Though oft the ear the open vowels tire;

While expletives their feeble aid do join ;
And ten low words oft creep in one dull line ;
While they ring round the same unvaried chimes,
With sure returns of still expected rhymes ;
Where'er you find "the cooling western breeze,"
In the next line, it "whispers through the trees ;"
If crystal streams "with pleasing murmurs creep,"
The reader's threaten'd (not in vain) with "sleep ;"
Then, at the last and only couplet fraught,
With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,
A needless Alexandrine ends the song,
That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.
Leave such to tune their own dull rhymes, and know
What's roundly smooth or languishingly slow ;
And praise the easy vigour of a line,
Where Denham's strength and Waller's sweetness join.
True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance.
'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
The sound must seem an echo to the sense.
Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows ;
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar :
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move slow :
Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the main.
Hear how Timotheus' varied lays surprise,
And bid alternate passions fall and rise !
While at each change, the son of Libyan Jove
Now burns with glory, and then melts with love ;

Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,
Now sighs steal out, and tears begin to flow:
Persians and Greeks like turns of nature found,
And the world's victor stood subdued by sound!
The power of music all our hearts allow,
And what Timotheus was, is DRYDEN now.

Avoid extremes; and shun the fault of such,
Who still are pleased too little or too much.
At every trifle scorn to take offence,
That always shows great pride, or little sense:
Those heads, as stomachs, are not sure the best,
Which nauseate all, and nothing can digest.
Yet let not each gay turn thy rapture move;
For fools admire, but men of sense approve;
As things seem large which we through mist descry,
Dulness is ever apt to magnify.

Some foreign writers, some our own despise;
The ancients only, or the moderns prize.
Thus wit like faith, by each man is applied
To one small sect, and all are damn'd beside.
Meanly they seek the blessing to confine,
And force that sun but on a part to shine,
Which not alone the southern wit sublimes,
But ripens spirits in cold northern climes;
Which from the first has shone on ages past,
Enlights the present, and shall warm the last;
Though each may feel increases and decays,
And see now clearer and now darker days.
Regard not then if wit be old or new,
But blame the false, and value still the true.

Some ne'er advance a judgment of their own,
But catch the spreading notion of the town:

They reason and conclude by precedent,
And own stale nonsense which they ne'er invent.
Some judge of authors' names, not works, and then
Nor praise nor blame the writings, but the men.
Of all this servile herd, the worst is he
That in proud dulness joins with quality.
A constant critic at the great man's board,
To fetch and carry nonsense for my lord.
What woeful stuff this madrigal would be,
In some starved hackney'd sonnetteer, or me?
But let a lord once own the happy lines,
How the wit brightens! how the style refines!
Before his sacred name flies every fault,
And each exalted stanza teems with thought!
The vulgar thus through imitation err;
As oft the learn'd by being singular;
So much they scorn the crowd, that if the throng
By chance go right, they purposely go wrong;
So schismatics the plain believers quit,
And are but damn'd for having too much wit.
Some praise at morning what they blame at night;
But always think the last opinion right.
A Muse by these is like a mistress used,
This hour she's idolized, the next abused;
While their weak heads, like towns unfortified,
'Twixt sense and nonsense daily change their side.
Ask them the cause; they're wiser still, they say;
And still to-morrow's wiser than to-day.
We think our fathers fools, so wise we grow;
Our wiser sons, no doubt, will think us so.
Once school-divines this zealous isle o'erspread;
Who knew most sentences, was deepest read;

Faiths gospel all, seem'd made to be disputed,
And none had sense enough to be confuted;
Scotists and Tomists now in peace remain,
Amidst their kindred cobwebs in Duck Lane.
If faith itself has different dresses worn,
What wonder modes in wit should take their turn?
Oft, leaving what is natural and fit,
The current folly proves the ready wit;
And authors think their reputation safe,
Which lives as long as fools are pleased to laugh.
Some valuing those of their own side or mind,
Still make themselves the measure of mankind:
Fondly we think we honour merit then,
When we but praise ourselves in other men.
Parties in wit attend on those of state,
And public faction doubles private hate.
Pride, malice, folly, against Dryden rose,
In various shapes of parsons, critics, beaux;
But sense survived when merry jests were past,
For rising merit will buoy up at last.
Might he return, and bless once more our eyes,
New Blackmores and new Milbourns must arise:
Nay should great Homer lift his awful head,
Zoilus again would start up from the dead.
Envy will merit, as its shade, pursue;
But like a shadow, proves the substance true:
For envied wit, like Sol eclipsed, makes known,
The opposing body's grossness, not its own.
When first that sun too powerful beams displays,
It draws up vapours which obscure its rays;
But even those clouds at last adorn its way,
Reflect new glories, and augment the day,

Be thou the first true merit to befriend;
His praise is lost, who stays till all commend.
Short is the date, alas, of modern rhymes,
And 'tis but just to let them live betimes.
No longer now that golden age appears,
When patriarch-wits survived a thousand years;
Now length of fame (our second life) is lost,
And bare threescore is all even that can boast;
Our sons their fathers' failing language see,
And such as Chaucer is, shall Dryden be.
So when the faithful pencil has design'd
Some bright idea of the master's mind,
Where a new world leaps out at his command
And ready nature waits upon his hand:
When the ripe colours soften and unite,
And sweetly melt into just shade and light;
When mellowing years their full perfection give,
And each bold figure just begins to live,
The treacherous colours the fair art betray,
And all the bright creation fades away!
Unhappy wit, like most mistaken things,
Atones not for that envy which it brings.
In youth alone its empty praise we boast,
But soon the short-lived vanity is lost:
Like some fair flower the early spring supplies,
That gaily blooms, but even in blooming dies.
What is this wit, which must our cares employ?
The owner's wife, that other men enjoy;
Then most our trouble still when most admired,
And still the more we give, the more required;
Whose fame with pains we guard, but lose with ease,
Sure some to vex, but never all to please;

'Tis what the vicious fear, the virtuous shun,
By fools 'tis hated, and by knaves undone!
If wit so much from ignorance undergo,
Ah, let not learning too commence its foe!
Of old, those met rewards who could excel,
And such were praised who but endeavour'd well:
Though triumphs were to generals only due,
Crowns were reserved to grace the soldiers too.
Now, they who reach Parnassus' lofty crown,
Employ their pains to spurn some others down;
And while self-love each jealous writer rules,
Contending wits become the sport of fools:
But still the worst with most regret commend,
For each ill author is as bad a friend.
To what base ends, and by what abject ways,
Are mortals urged through sacred lust of praise!
Ah, ne'er so dire a thirst of glory boast,
Nor in the critic let the man be lost.
Good-nature and good sense must ever join;
To err is human, to forgive, divine.
But if in noble minds some dregs remain
Not yet purged off, of spleen and sour disdain;
Discharge that rage on more provoking crimes,
Nor fear a dearth in these flagitious times.
No pardon vile obscenity should find,
Though wit and art conspire to move your mind;
But dulness with obscenity must prove
As shameful sure as impotence in love.
In the fat age of pleasure, wealth, and ease,
Sprung the rank weed, and thrived with large increase
When love was all an easy monarch's care:
Seldom at council, never in a war:

Jilts ruled the state, and statesmen farces writ:
Nay wits had pensions, and young lords had wit:
The fair sate panting at a courtier's play,
And not a mask went unimproved away:
The modest fan was lifted up no more,
And virgins smiled at what they blush'd before.
The following licence of a foreign reign
Did all the dregs of bold Socinus drain;
Then unbelieving priests reform'd the nation,
And taught more pleasant methods of salvation;
Where heaven's free subjects might their rights dispute,
Lest God himself should seem too absolute:
Pulpits their sacred satire learn'd to spare,
And vice admired to find a flatterer there!
Encouraged thus, wit's Titans braved the skies,
And the press groan'd with licenced blasphemies.
These monsters, critics! with your darts engage,
Here point your thunder, and exhaust your rage!
Yet shun their fault, who scandalously nice,
Will needs mistake an author into vice;
All seems infected that the infected spy,
As all looks yellow to the jaundiced eye.

III.

Learn then what MORALS critics ought to show,
For 'tis but half a judge's task to know.
'Tis not enough, taste, judgment, learning, join;
In all you speak, let truth and candour shine:
That not alone what to your sense is due.
All may allow; but seek your friendship too.
Be silent always, when you doubt your sense;
And speak, though sure, with seeming diffidence:

Some positive, *persisting fops we know*,
Who, if once wrong, will needs be always so;
But you with pleasure own your errors past,
And make each day a critique on the last.
'Tis not enough your counsel still be true;
Blunt truths more mischief than nice falsehoods do:
Men must be taught as if you taught them not,
And things unknown proposed as things forgot.
Without good-breeding, truth is disapproved;
That only makes superior sense beloved.
Be niggards of advice on no pretence:
For the worst avarice is that of sense.
With mean complacence ne'er betray your trust,
Nor be so civil as to prove unjust.
Fear not the anger of the wise to raise;
Those best can bear reproof, who merit praise.
'Twere well might critics still this freedom take,
But Appius reddens at each word you speak,
And stares, tremendous with a threatening air,
Like some fierce tyrant in old tapestry.
Fear most to tax an honourable fool,
Whose right it is, uncensured, to be dull;
Such, without wit, are poets when they please,
As without learning they can take degrees.
Leave dangerous truths to unsuccessful satires,
And flattery to fulsome dedicators,
Whom when they praise, the world believes no more,
Than when they promise to give scribbling o'er.
'Tis best sometimes your censure to restrain,
And charitably let the dull be vain:
Your silence there is better than your spite,
For who can rail so long as they can write?

Still hamming on their drowsy course they keep,
And lash'd so long, like tops, are lash'd asleep.
False steps but help them to renew the race,
As, after stumbling, jades will mend their pace.
What crowds of these, impenitently bold,
In sounds and jingling syllables grown old,
Still run on poets in a raging vein,
Even to the dregs and squeezing of the brain,
Strain out the last dull droppings of their sense,
And rhyme with all the rage of impotence.

Such shameless bards we have; and yet 'tis true,
There are as mad, abandon'd critics too.
The bookful blockhead ignorantly read,
With loads of learned lumber in his head,
With his own tongue still edifies his ears,
And always listening to himself appears.
All books he reads, and all he reads assails,
From Dryden's Fables down to Durfey's Tales.
With him most authors steal their works, or buy;
Garth did not write his own Dispensary.
Name a new play, and he's the poet's friend,
Nay show'd his faults—but when would poets mend?
No place so sacred from such fops is barr'd,
Nor is Paul's church more safe than Paul's church-yard:
Nay, fly to altars; there they'll talk you dead;
For fools rush in where angels fear to tread.
Distrustful sense with modest caution speaks,
It still looks home, and short excursions makes;
But rattling nonsense in full volleys breaks,
And never shock'd, and never turn'd aside,
Bursts out, resistless, with a thundering tide.

But where's the man who counsel can bestow,
Still pleased to teach, and yet not proud to know?

Unbiass'd or by favour or by spite;
Not dully prepossess'd nor blindly right;
Though learn'd well-bred; and though well-bred, sincere
Modestly bold, and humanly severe;
Who to a friend his faults can freely show,
And gladly praise the merit of a foe?
Blest with a taste exact, yet unconfined;
A knowledge both of books and human kind;
Generous converse; a soul exempt from pride;
And love to praise, with reason on his side?
Such once were critics; such the happy few,
Athens and Rome in better ages knew.
The mighty Stagirite first left the shore,
Spread all his sails, and durst the deeps explore;
He steer'd securely, and discover'd far,
Led by the light of the Maeonian star.
Poets, a race long unconfined, and free,
Still fond and proud of savage liberty,
Received his laws; and stood convinced 'twas fit,
Who conquer'd nature should preside o'er wit.
Horace still charms with graceful negligence,
And without method talks us into sense;
Will, like a friend, familiarly convey
The truest notions in the easiest way.
He who supreme in judgment, as in wit,
Might boldly censure as he boldly writ,
Yet judged with coolness, though he sung with fire:
His precepts teach but what his works inspire.
Our critics take a contrary extreme,
They judge with fury, but they write with phlegm:
Nor suffers Horace more in wrong translations
By wits, than critics in as wrong quotations.

See *Dionysius Homer's thoughts refine,*
And call new beauties forth from every line!
Fancy and art in gay Petronius please,
The scholar's learning with the courtier's ease.
In grave Quintilian's copious work, we find
The justest rules and clearest method join'd:
Thus useful arms in magazines we place,
All ranged in order, and disposed with grace,
But less to please the eye, than arm the hand,
Still fit for use, and ready at command.
Thee, bold Longinus! all the Nine inspire,
And bless their critic with a poet's fire.
An ardent judge, who zealous in his trust,
With warmth gives sentence, yet is always just:
Whose own example strengthens all his laws;
And is himself that great sublime he draws.
Thus long succeeding critics justly reign'd,
Licence repress'd, and useful laws ordain'd.
Learning and Rome alike in empire grew;
And arts still follow'd where her eagles flew;
From the same foes at last both felt their doom,
And the same age saw learning fall and Rome.
With tyranny then superstition join'd
As that the body, this enslaved the mind;
Much was believed, but little understood,
And to be dull was construed to be good;
A second deluge learning thus o'errun,
And the monks finish'd what the Goths begun.
At length Erasmus, that great injured name
(The glory of the priesthood and the shame!)
Stemm'd the wild torrent of a barbarous age,
And drove those holy Vandals off the stage.

But see! each muse, in LEO's golden days,
Starts from her trance, and trims her wither'd bays,
Rome's ancient genius, o'er its ruins spread,
Shakes off the dust, and rears his reverend head.
Then sculpture and her sister-arts revive;
Stones leap'd to form, and rocks began to live;
With sweeter notes each rising temple rung;
A Raphael painted, and a Vida sung.
Immortal Vida! on whose honour'd brow
The poet's bays and critic's ivy grow:
Cremona now shall ever boast thy name,
As next in place to Mantua, next in fame!
But soon by impious arms from Latium chased,
Their ancient bounds the banish'd Muses pass'd.
Thence arts o'er all the northern world advance,
But critic learning flourish'd most in France;
The rules a nation, born to serve, obeys;
And Boileau still in right of Horace sways.
But we, brave Britons, foreign laws despised,
And kept unconquer'd, and uncivilised;
Fierce for the liberties of wit and bold,
We still defied the Romans, as of old.
Yet some there were among the sounder few
Of those who less presumed and better knew,
Who durst assert the juster ancient cause,
And here restored wit's fundamental laws.
Such was the Muse, whose rules and practice tell.
"Nature's chief masterpiece is writing well."
Such was Roscommon, not more learn'd than good,
With manners generous as his noble blood;
To him the wit of Greece and Rome was known,
And every author's merit, but his own.

Such late was Walsh—the Muse's judge and friend,
Who justly knew to blame or to commend;
To failings mild, but zealous for desert;
The clearest head, and the sincerest heart.
This humble praise, lamented shade, receive!
This praise at least a grateful Muse may give:
The Muse, whose early voice you taught to sing,
Prescribed her heights, and pruned her tender wing,
(Her guide now lost) no more attempts to rise,
But in low numbers short excursions tries:
Content, if hence the unlearn'd their wants may view,
The learn'd reflect on what before they knew;
Careless of censure, nor too fond of fame;
Still pleased to praise, yet not afraid to blame;
Averse alike to flatter, or offend;
Not free from faults, nor yet too vain to mend.

POPE.

DISCOURSE ON NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

THE situation of man on the globe he inhabits, and over which he has obtained the control, is in many respects exceedingly remarkable. Compared with its other denizens, he seems, if we regard only his physical constitution, in almost every respect their inferior, and equally unprovided for the supply of his natural wants, and his defence against the innumerable enemies which surround him. No other animal passes

so large a portion of its existence in a state of absolute helplessness, or falls in old age into such protracted and lamentable imbecility. To no other warm-blooded animal has nature denied that indispensable covering, without which the vicissitudes of a temperate and the rigors of a cold climate are equally insupportable; and to scarcely any has she been so sparing in external weapons, whether for attack or defence. Destitute alike of speed to avoid, and of arms to repel, the aggressions of his voracious foes; tenderly susceptible of atmospheric influences; and unfitted for the coarse aliments which the earth affords spontaneously during at least two-thirds of the year, even in temperate climates,—man, if abandoned to mere instinct, would be of all creatures the most destitute and miserable. Distracted by terror, and goaded by famine; driven to the most abject expedients for concealment from his enemies, and to the most cowardly devices for the seizure and destruction of his nobler prey, his existence would be one continued subterfuge or stratagem;—his dwelling would be in dens of the earth, in clefts of rocks, or in the hollows of trees; his food worms, and the lower reptiles, or such few and crude productions of the soil as his organs could be brought to assimilate, varied with occasional relics, mangled by more powerful beasts of prey, or contemned by their more pampered choice. Remarkable only for the absence of those power and qualities which obtain for other animals a degree of security and respect, he would be disregarded by some, and hunted down by others

till, after a few generations, his species would become altogether extinct, or, at best, would be restricted to a few islands in tropical regions, where the warmth of the climate, the paucity of enemies, and the abundance of vegetable food, might permit it to linger.

Yet man is the undisputed lord of the creation. The strongest and fiercest of his fellow-creatures, —the whale, the elephant, the eagle, and the tiger, —are slaughtered by him to supply his most capricious wants, or tamed to do him service, or imprisoned to make him sport. The spoils of all nature are in daily requisition for his most common uses, yielded with more or less readiness, or wrested with reluctance, from the mine, the forest, the ocean, and the air. Such are the first fruits of reason. Were they the only or the principal ones, were the mere acquisition of power over the materials, and the less gifted animals which surround us, and the consequent increase of our external comforts, and our means of preservation and sensual enjoyment, the sum of the privileges which the possession of this faculty conferred, we should after all have little to plume ourselves upon. But this is so far from being the case, that every one who passes his life in tolerable ease and comfort, or rather whose whole time is not anxiously consumed in providing the absolute necessaries of existence, is conscious of wants and cravings in which the senses have no part, of a series of pains and pleasures totally distinct in kind from any which the infliction of bodily misery or the gratification of bodily appetites has ever afforded him; and if he has experienced

these pleasures and these pains in any degree of intensity, he will readily admit them to hold a much higher rank, and to deserve much more attention, than the former class. Independent of the pleasures of fancy and imagination, and social converse, man is constituted a speculative being; he contemplates the world, and the objects around him, not with a passive, indifferent gaze, as a set of phenomena in which he has no further interest than as they affect his immediate situation, and can be rendered subservient to his comfort, but as a system disposed with order and design. He approves and feels the highest admiration of the harmony of its parts, the skill and efficiency of its contrivances. Some of these, which he can best trace and understand, he attempts to imitate, and finds that to a certain extent, though rudely and imperfectly, he can succeed,—in others, that although he can comprehend the nature of the contrivance, he is totally destitute of all means of imitation;—while in others, again, and those evidently the most important, though he sees the effect produced, yet the means by which it is done are alike beyond his knowledge and his control. Thus he is led to the conception of a Power and an Intelligence superior to his own, and adequate to the production and maintenance of all that he sees in nature,—a Power and Intelligence to which he may well apply the term infinite, since he not only sees no actual limit to the instances in which they are manifested, but finds, on the contrary, that the farther he inquires, and the wider his sphere of observation extends, they continually

open upon him in increasing abundance; and that as the study of one prepares him to understand and appreciate another, refinement follows on refinement, wonder on wonder, till his faculties become bewildered in admiration, and his intellect falls back on itself in utter hopelessness of arriving at an end.

When from external objects he turns his view upon himself, on his own vital and intellectual faculties, he finds that he possesses a power of examining and analyzing his own nature to a certain extent, but no farther. In his corporeal frame he is sensible of a power to communicate a certain moderate amount of motion to himself and other objects; that this power depends on his will, and that its exertion can be suspended or increased at pleasure within certain limits; but *how* his will acts on his limbs he has no consciousness; and whence he derives the power he thus exercises, there is nothing to assure him, however he may long to know. His senses, too, inform him of a multitude of particulars respecting the external world, and he perceives an apparatus by which impressions from without may be transmitted, as a sort of signals, to the interior of his person, and ultimately to his brain, wherein he is obscurely sensible that the thinking, feeling, reasoning being he calls *himself*, more especially resides; but by what means he becomes conscious of these impressions, and what is the nature of the immediate communication between that inward sentient being, and the machinery, his outward man, he has not the slightest conception.

Again, when he contemplates still more attentively the thoughts, acts, and passions of this his sentient, intelligent self, he finds, indeed, that he can remember, and, by the aid of memory, can compare and discriminate, can judge and resolve, and, above all, that he is irresistibly impelled from the perception of any phenomenon without or within him to infer the existence of something prior, which stands to it in the relation of a *cause*, without which it would not be, and that this knowledge of causes and their consequences is what in almost every instance, determines his choice and will, in cases where he is nevertheless conscious of perfect freedom to act or not to act. He finds, too, that it is in his power to acquire more or less knowledge of causes and effects, according to the degree of attention he bestows upon them, which attention is again in great measure a voluntary act; and often when his choice has been decided on imperfect knowledge or insufficient attention, he finds reason to correct his judgment, though perhaps too late to influence his decision by after consideration. A world within him is thus opened to his intellectual view, abounding with phenomena and relations, and of the highest immediate interest. But while he cannot help perceiving that the insight he is enabled to obtain into this internal sphere of thought and feeling is in reality the source of all his power, the very fountain of his predominance over external nature, he yet feels himself capable of entering only very imperfectly into these recesses of his own bosom, and analyzing the operations of his mind,—in this as

in all other things, in short, *"a being darkly wise"* seeing that all the longest life and most vigorous intellect can give him power to discover by his own research, or time to know by availing himself of that of others, serves only to place him on the very frontier of knowledge, and afford a distant glimpse of boundless realms beyond, where no human thought has penetrated, but which yet he is sure must be no less familiarly known to that Intelligence which he traces throughout creation than the most obvious truths which he himself daily applies to his most trifling purposes. Is it wonderful that a being so constituted should first encourage a hope, and by degrees acknowledge an assurance, that his intellectual existence will not terminate with the dissolution of his corporeal frame, but rather that, in a future state of being, disencumbered of a thousand obstructions which his present situation throws in his way, endowed with acuter senses, and higher faculties, he shall drink deep at that fountain of beneficent wisdom, for which the slight taste obtained on earth has given him so keen a relish?

Nothing, then, can be more unfounded than the objection which has been taken, *in limine*, by persons, well meaning perhaps, certainly narrow-minded, against the study of natural philosophy, and, indeed, against all science,—that it fosters in its cultivators an undue [redacted] overweening self-conceit, leads them to doubt the immortality of the soul, and to scoff at revealed religion. Its natural effect, we may confidently assert, on every well-constituted mind, is and must be the direct

contrary. No doubt, the testimony of natural reason, on whatever exercised, must of necessity stop short of those truths which it is the object of revelation to make known; but, while it places the existence and principle attributes of a Deity on such grounds as to render doubt absurd and atheism ridiculous, it unquestionably opposes no natural or necessary obstacle to farther progress: on the contrary, by cherishing as a vital principle an unbounded spirit of inquiry, and ardency of expectation, it unfetters the mind from prejudices of every kind, and leaves it open and free to every impression of a higher nature which it is susceptible of receiving, guarding only against enthusiasm and self-deception by a habit of strict investigation, but encouraging, rather than suppressing, every thing that can offer a prospect or a hope beyond the present obscure and unsatisfactory state. The character of the true philosopher is to hope all things not impossible, and to believe all things not unreasonable. He who has seen obscurities which appeared impenetrable, in physical and mathematical science, suddenly dispelled, and the most barren and unpromising fields of inquiry converted, as if by inspiration, into rich and inexhaustible springs of knowledge and power, on a simple change of our point of view, or by merely bringing to bear on them some principle which it never occurred before to try, will surely be the very last to acquiesce in any disheartening prospects of either the present or future destinies of mankind; while, on the other hand, the boundless views of intellectual and moral as well as material relations,

which open on him on all hands in the course of these pursuits, the knowledge of the trivial place he occupies in the scale of creation, and the sense continually pressed upon him of his own weakness and incapacity to suspend or modify the slightest movement of the vast machinery he sees in action around him, must effectually convince him that humility of pretension, no less than confidence of hope, is what best becomes his character.

But while we thus vindicate the study of natural philosophy from a charge at one time formidable, from the pertinacity and acrimony with which it was urged, and still occasionally brought forward to the distress and disgust of every well-constituted mind, we must take care that the testimony afforded by science to religion, be its extent or value what it may, shall be at least independent, unbiassed, and spontaneous. We do not here allude to such reasoners as would make all nature bend to their narrow interpretations of obscure and difficult passages in the sacred writings: such a course might well become the persecutors of Galileo and the other bigots of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but can only be adopted by dreamers in the present age. But without going these lengths, it is no uncommon thing to find persons earnestly attached to science, and anxious for its promotion, who yet manifest a morbid sensibility on points of this kind,—who exult and applaud when any fact starts up explanatory (as they suppose) of some scriptural allusion, and who feel pained and disappointed when the general

course of discovery in any department of science runs wide of the notions with which particular passages in the Bible may have impressed themselves. 'To persons of such a frame of mind it ought to suffice to remark, on the one hand, that truth can never be opposed to truth, and, on the other, that error is only to be effectually confounded by searching deep and tracing it to its source. Nevertheless, it were much to be wished that such persons, estimable and excellent as they for the most part are, before they throw the weight of their applause or discredit into the scale of scientific opinion on such grounds, would reflect, first, that the credit and respectability of *any* evidence may be destroyed by tampering with its *honesty;* and, secondly, that this very disposition of mind implies a lurking mistrust in its own principles, since the grand and indeed only character of truth is its capability of enduring the test of universal experience,' and coming unchanged out of every possible form of *fair* discussion.

But if science may be vilified by representing it as opposed to religion, or trammelled by mistaken notions of the danger of free inquiry, there is yet another mode by which it may be degraded from its native dignity, and that is by placing it in the light of a mere appendage to, and caterer for, our pampered appetites. The question "*cui bono?*" to what practical end and advantage do your researches tend? is one which the speculative philosopher, who loves knowledge for its own sake, and enjoys, as a rational being should enjoy, the mere contemplation of ha[illegible]

monious and mutually dependent truths, can seldom hear without a sense of humiliation. He feels that there is a lofty and disinterested pleasure in his speculations which ought to exempt them from such questioning: communicating as they do to his own mind the purest happiness (after the exercise of the benevolent and moral feelings) of which human nature is susceptible, and tending to the injury of no one, he might surely allege *this* as a sufficient and direct reply to those who, having themselves little capacity and less relish for intellectual pursuits, are constantly repeating upon him this inquiry. But if he can bring himself to descend from this high but fair ground, and justify himself, his pursuits, and his pleasures, in the eyes of those around him, he has only to point to the history of all science, where speculations apparently the most unprofitable have almost invariably been those from which the greatest practical applications have emanated. What, for instance, could be apparently more unprofitable than the dry speculations of the ancient geometers on the properties of the conic sections, or than the dreams of Kepler (as they would naturally appear to his contemporaries) about the numerical harmonies of the universe? Yet these are the steps by which we have risen to a knowledge of the elliptic motions of the planets and the law of gravitation, with all its splendid theoretical consequences, and its inestimable practical results. The ridicule attached to "*swing swangs*" in Hooke's time, did not prevent him from reviving the proposal of the *pendulum* as a standard of measure, since so ad-

mirably wrought into practice by the genius and perseverance of Captain Kater;—nor did that which Boyle encountered in his researches on the elasticity and pressure of the air, act as any obstacle to the train of discovery which terminated in the steam-engine. The dreams of the alchemists led them on in the path of experiment, and drew attention to the wonders of chemistry, while they brought their advocates (it must be admitted) to merited contempt and ruin. But in this case, it was moral dereliction which gave to ridicule a weight and power not necessarily or naturally belonging to it; but among the alchemists were men of superior minds, who reasoned while they worked, and who, not content to grope always in the dark, and blunder on their object, sought carefully, in the observed nature of their agents, for guides in their pursuits;—to these we owe the creation of experimental philosophy.

Not that it is meant, by any thing above said, to assert that there is no such thing as a great or a little in speculative philosophy, or to place the solution of an enigma on a level with the developement of a law of nature; still less to adopt the homely definition of Smith, that a philosopher is a person whose trade it is to do nothing and speculate on every thing. The speculations of the natural philosopher, however remote they may for a time lead him from beaten tracks and every day uses, being grounded in the realities of nature, have all, of necessity, a practical application,—nay, more, such applications are the very criterions of their truth, they af-

ford the readiest and completest verifications of his theories; verifications which he will no more neglect to test them by, than an arithmetician would omit to *prove* his sums, or a cautious geometer to try his general theorems by particular cases.

After all, however, it must be confessed, that, to minds unacquainted with science, and unused to consider the mutual dependencies of its various branches, there is something neither unnatural nor altogether blamable in the ready occurrence of this question of direct advantage. It requires some habit of abstraction, some penetration of the mind with a tincture of scientific inquiry, some conviction of the value of those estimable and treasured principles which lie concealed in the most common and homely facts,—some experience, in fine, of success in developing and placing them in evidence, announcing them in precise terms, and applying them to the explanation of other facts of a less familiar character, or to the accomplishment of some obviously useful purpose,—to cure the mind of this tendency to rush at once upon its object, to undervalue the means in over-estimation of the end, and, while gazing too intently at the goal which alone it has been accustomed to desire, to lose sight of the richness and variety of the prospects that offer themselves on either hand on the road.

We must never forget that it is principles, not phenomena,—laws, not insulated independent facts,—which are the objects of inquiry to the natural philosopher. As truth is single, and consistent with itself, a principle may be as com-

pletely and as plainly elucidated by the most familiar and simple fact as by the most imposing and uncommon phenomenon. The colors which glitter on a soap-bubble are the immediate consequence of a principle the most important from the variety of phenomena it explains, and the most beautiful, from its simplicity and compendious neatness, in the whole science of optics. If the nature of periodical colors can be made intelligible by the contemplation of such a trivial object, from that moment it becomes a noble instrument in the eye of correct judgment; and to blow a large, regular, and durable soap-bubble may become the serious and praise-worthy endeavor of a sage, while children stand round and scoff, or children of a larger growth hold up their hands in astonishment at such waste of time and trouble. To the natural philosopher there is no natural object unimportant or trifling. From the least of nature's works he may learn the greatest lessons. The fall of an apple to the ground may raise his thoughts to the laws which govern the revolutions of the planets in their orbits; or the situation of a pebble may afford him evidence of the state of the globe he inhabits, myriads of ages ago, before his species became its denizens.

And this is, in fact, one of the great sources of delight which the study of natural science imparts to its votaries. A mind which has once imbibed a taste for scientific inquiry, and has learnt the habit of applying its principles readily to cases which occur, has within itself an inexhaustible source of pure and exciting contem-

plation:—one would think that Shakspeare had such a mind in view when he describes a contemplative man as finding

> Tongues in trees—books in the running brooks—
> Sermons in stones—and good in every thing.

Accustomed to trace the operation of general causes, and the exemplification of general laws, in circumstances where the uninformed and uninquiring eye perceives neither novelty nor beauty, he walks in the midst of wonders: every object which falls in his way elucidates some principle, affords some instruction, and impresses him with a sense of harmony and order. Nor is it a mere passive pleasure which is thus communicated. A thousand questions are continually arising in his mind, a thousand subjects of inquiry presenting themselves, which keep his faculties in constant exercise, and his thoughts perpetually on the wing, so that lassitude is excluded from his life, and that craving after artificial excitement and dissipation of mind, which leads so many into frivolous, unworthy, and destructive pursuits, is altogether eradicated from his bosom.

It is not one of the least advantages of these pursuits, which, however, they possess in common with every class of intellectual pleasures, that they are altogether independent of external circumstances, and are to be enjoyed in every situation in which a man can be placed in life. The highest degrees of worldly prosperity are so far from being incompatible with them, that they supply additional advantages for their pursuit, and that sort of fresh and renewed relish which

arises partly from the sense of contrast, partly from experience of the peculiar pre-eminence they possess over the pleasures of sense in their capability of unlimited increase, and continual repetition without satiety or distaste. They may be enjoyed, too, in the intervals of the most active business; and the calm and dispassionate interest with which they fill the mind renders them a most delightful retreat from the agitations and dissensions of the world, and from the conflict of passions, prejudices, and interests, in which the man of business finds himself continually involved. There is something in the contemplation of general laws which powerfully persuades us to merge individual feeling, and to commit ourselves unreservedly to their disposal; while the observation of the calm, energetic, regularity of nature, the immense scale of her operations, and the certainty with which her ends are attained, tends, irresistibly, to tranquillize and re-assure the mind, and render it less accessible to repining, selfish, and turbulent emotions. And this it does, not by debasing our nature into weak compliances and abject submission to circumstances, but by filling us, as from an inward spring, with a sense of nobleness and power which enables us to rise superior to them, by showing us our strength and innate dignity, and by calling upon us for the exercise of those powers and faculties by which we are susceptible of the comprehension of so much greatness, and which form, as it were, a link between ourselves and the best and noblest benefactors of our species with whom we hold communion in thoughts, and participate

in discoveries which have raised them above their fellow-mortals, and brought them nearer to their Creator.

HERSCHEL.

ON MY MOTHER'S PICTURE.

O THAT those lips had language! Life has pass'd
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,
The same, that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
'Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!'
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Bless'd be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
To quench it) here shines on me still the same.
Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bidd'st me honour with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long.
I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own:
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream, that thou art she.
My mother! when I learn'd that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?

Perhaps thou gavest me, though unfelt, a kiss;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile! it answers—Yes.
I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such?—It was.—Where thou art gone,
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wish'd I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived.
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent
I learn'd at last submission to my lot.
But though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.
Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapp'd
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capp'd,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we call'd the pastoral house our own.
Short-lived possession! but the record fair,
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.

Thy nightly visit to my chamber made,
That thou might'st know me safe and warmly laid ;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit, or confectionary plum ;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestow'd
By thy own hand till fresh they shone and glow'd :
All this, and more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughen'd by those cataracts and breaks,
That humour interposed too often makes ;
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honours to thee as my numbers may ;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorn'd in Heaven, though little noticed here.

Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I prick'd them into paper with a pin,
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head, and smile)
Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
I would not trust my heart—the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.—
But no—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weather'd and the ocean cross'd)
Shoots into port at some well-haven'd isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,

There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay ;
So thou, with sails how swift ! hast reach'd the shore,
"Where tempests never beat nor billows roar,"
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life long since has anchor'd by thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distress'd—
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-toss'd,
Sails ripp'd, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosp'rous course.
But oh the thought, that thou art safe, and he !
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not, that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth ;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
The son of parents pass'd into the skies.
And now, farewell—Time unrevoked has run
His wonted course, yet what I wish'd is done.
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem'd t'have lived my childhood o'er again ;
To have renew'd the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine ;
And, while the wings of Fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic show of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft—
Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

COWPER.

Garth.

THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES.

Let observation, with extensive view,
Survey mankind from China to Peru;
Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,
And watch the busy scenes of crowded life;
Then say how hope and fear, desire and hate,
O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate,
Where wav'ring man, betray'd by vent'rous pride,
To tread the dreary paths without a guide,
As treach'rous phantoms in the mist delude,
Shuns fancied ills, or chases airy good;
How rarely reason guides the stubborn choice,
Rules the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice;
How nations sink, by darling schemes oppress'd,
When Vengeance listens to the fool's request.
Fate wings with ev'ry wish th' afflictive dart,
Each gift of nature, and each grace of art;
With fatal heat impetuous courage glows
With fatal sweetness elocution flows;
Impeachment stops the speaker's pow'rful breath,
And restless fire precipitates on death.

But, scarce observ'd, the knowing and the bold
Fall in the gen'ral massacre of gold;
Wide-wasting pest! that rages unconfin'd,
And crowds with crimes the records of mankind:
For gold his sword the hireling ruffian draws,
For gold the hireling judge distorts the laws;
Wealth heap'd on wealth, nor truth nor safety buys,
The dangers gather as the treasures rise.

Let History tell where rival kings command,
And dubious title shakes the maddened land,
When statutes glean the refuse of the sword,
How much more safe the vassal than the lord;
Low skulks the hind beneath the rage of power,
And leaves the wealthy traitor in the Tower,
Untouch'd his cottage, and his slumbers sound,
Though Confiscation's vultures hover round.

The needy traveller, serene and gay,
Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.
Does envy seize thee? crush th' upbraiding joy;
Increase his riches, and his peace destroy;
Now fears in dire vicissitude invade,
The rustling brake alarms, and quiv'ring shade;
Nor light nor darkness bring his pain relief,
One shows the plunder, and one hides the thief.

Yet still one general cry the skies assails,
And gain and grandeur load the tainted gales;
Few know the toiling statesman's fear or care,
Th' insidious rival and the gaping heir.

Once more, Democritus, arise on earth,
With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth,
See motley life in modern trappings dress'd,
And feed with varied fools th' eternal jest:
Thou who could'st laugh where want enchain'd caprice,
Toil crush'd conceit, and man was of a piece:
Where wealth, unlov'd, without a mourner dy'd;
And scarce a sycophant was fed by pride;
Where ne'er was known the form of mock debate,
Or seen a new-made mayor's unwieldy state;
Where change of fav'rites made no change of laws,
Senates heard before they judg'd a cause;

How would'st thou shake at Britain's modish tribe,
Dart the quick taunt, and edge the piercing gibe?
Attentive truth and nature to descry,
And pierce each scene with philosophic eye,
To thee were solemn toys, or empty show,
The robes of pleasure and the veils of woe:
All aid the farce, and all thy mirth maintain,
Whose joys are causeless, and whose griefs are vain.

Such was the scorn that fill'd the sage's mind,
Renew'd at ev'ry glance on human kind;
How just that scorn ere yet thy voice declare,
Search ev'ry state, and canvass ev'ry pray'r

Unnumber'd suppliants crowd Preferment's gate,
Athirst for wealth, and burning to be great;
Delusive Fortune hears th' incessant call,
They mount, they shine, evaporate, and fall,
On ev'ry stage the foes of peace attend,
Hate dogs their flight, and insult mocks their end.
Love ends with hope, the sinking statesman's door
Pours in the morning worshipper no more;
For growing names the weekly scribbler lies,
To growing wealth the dedicator flies;
From ev'ry room descends the painted face,
That hung the bright Palladium of the place;
And, smok'd in kitchens, or in auctions sold,
To better features yields the frame of gold;
For now no more we trace in ev'ry line
Heroic worth, benevolence divine:
The form distorted, justifies the fall,
And detestation rids th' indignant wall.

But will not Britain hear the last appeal,
Sign her foes' doom, or guard her fav'rites' zeal?

Thro' Freedom's sons no more remonstrance rings,
Degrading nobles, and controuling kings;
Our supple tribes repress their patriot throats,
And ask no questions but the price of votes;
With weekly libels and septennial ale.
Their wish is full to riot and to rail.

In full-blown dignity, see Wolsey stand,
Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand:
To him the church, the realm, their pow'rs consign.
Through him the rays of regal bounty shine,
Turn'd by his nod the stream of honour flows,
His smile alone security bestows:
Still to new heights his restless wishes tow'r,
Claim leads to claim, and pow'r advances pow'r;
Till conquest unresisted ceas'd to please,
And rights submitted, left him none to seize.
At length his sov'reign frowns—the train of state
Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate.
Where'er he turns, he meets a stranger's eye,
His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly;
Now drops at once the pride of awful state,
The golden canopy, the glitt'ring plate,
The regal palace, the luxurious board,
The liv'ried army, and the menial lord.
With age, with cares, with maladies oppress'd,
He seeks the refuge of monastic rest.
Grief aids disease, remember'd folly stings,
And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings.

Speak thou, whose thoughts at humble peace repine,
Shall Wolsey's wealth, with Wolsey's end, be thine?
Or liv'st thou now, with safer pride content,
The wisest justice on the banks of Trent?

For, why did Wolsey, near the steeps of fate,
On weak foundations raise th' enormous weight ?
Why but to sink beneath misfortune's blow,
With louder ruin to the gulphs below ?
What gave great Villiers to th' assassin's knife,
And fix'd disease on Harley's closing life ?
What murder'd Wentworth, and what exil'd Hyde,
By kings protected, and to kings ally'd ?
What but their wish indulgd in courts to shine,
And pow'r too great to keep, or to resign ?
When first the college rolls receive his name,
The young enthusiast quits his ease for fame ;
Resistless burns the fever of renown,
Caught from the strong contagion of the gown :
O'er Bodley's dome his future labours spread,
And Bacon's mansion trembles o'er his head.
Are these thy views ? Proceed, illustrious youth,
And Virtue guard thee to the throne of Truth !
Yet, should thy soul indulge the gen'rous heat
Till captive Science yields her last retreat ;
Should Reason guide thee with her brightest ray,
And pour on misty Doubt resistless day ;
Should no false kindness lure to loose delight
Nor praise relax, nor difficulty fright ;
Should tempting Novelty thy cell refrain,
And Sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain ;
Should beauty blunt on fops her fatal dart,
Nor claim the triumph of a letter'd heart ;
Should no disease thy torpid veins invade,
Nor Melancholy's phantoms haunt thy shade ;
Yet hope not life from grief or danger free,
Nor think the doom of man revers'd for thee,

Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,
And pause awhile from Letters, to be wise;
There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail.
See nations, slowly wise, and meanly just,
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.
If dreams yet flatter, once again attend,
Hear Lydiat's life, and Galileo's end.

Nor deem when Learning her last prize bestows,
The glitt'ring eminence exempt from woes:
See, when the vulgar scape despis'd or aw'd,
Rebellion's vengeful talons seize on Laud.
From meaner minds though smaller fines content,
The plunder'd palace, or sequester'd rent;
Mark'd out by dang'rous parts, he meets the shock,
And fatal Learning leads him to the block:
Around his tomb let Art and Genius weep,
But hear his death, ye blockheads, hear and sleep.

The festal blazes, the triumphal show,
The ravish'd standard, and the captive foe,
The senate's thanks, the Gazette's pompous tale,
With force resistless o'er the brave prevail.
Such bribes the rapid Greek o'er Asia whirl'd,
For such the steady Romans shook the world;
For such in distant lands the Britons shine,
And stain with blood the Danube or the Rhine;
This pow'r has praise that virtue scarce can warm,
Till Fame supplies the universal charm.
Yet Reason frowns on War's unequal game,
Where wasted nations raise a single name;
And mortgag'd states their grand sires' wreaths regret,
From age to age in everlasting debt;

Wreaths which at last the dear-bought right convey
To rust on medals, or on stones decay.
On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,
How just his hopes, let Swedish Charles decide;
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire;
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquer'd lord of pleasure and of pain;
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;
Behold surrounding kings their pow'r combine,
And one capitulate, and one resign;
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;
"Think nothing gain'd," he cries, "till nought remain,
"On Moscow's walls till Gothic standards fly,
"And all be mine beneath the polar sky."
The march begins in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended wait;
Stern Famine guards the solitary coast,
And Winter barricades the realm of Frost;
He comes, nor want nor cold his course delay;—
Hide, blushing Glory, hide Pultowa's day.
The vanquish'd hero leaves his broken bands,
And shows his miseries in distant lands;
Condemn'd a needy supplicant to wait,
While ladies interpose, and slaves debate.
But did not Chance at length her error mend?
Did no subverted empire mark his end?
Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound?
Or hostile millions press him to the ground?
His fall was destin'd to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand;

He left the name, at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.

All times their scenes of pompous woes afford,
From Persia's tyrant to Bavaria's lord.
In gay hostility and barb'rous pride,
With half mankind embattled at his side,
Great Xerxes comes to seize the certain prey,
And starves exhausted regions in his way;
Attendant Flatt'ry counts his myriads o'er,
Till counted myriads sooth his pride no more:
Fresh praise is try'd till madness fires his mind,
The waves he lashes, and enchains the wind,
New pow'rs are claim'd, new pow'rs are still bestow'd,
Till rude Resistance lops the spreading god;
The daring Greeks deride the martial show,
And heap their valleys with the gaudy foe;
Th' insulted sea with humbler thoughts he gains,
A single skiff to speed his flight remains;
Th' incumber'd oar scarce leaves the dreaded coast,
Through purple billows and a floating host.

The bold Bavarian, in a luckless hour,
Tries the dread summits of Cæsarean pow'r,
With unexpected legions bursts away,
And sees defenceless realms receive his sway;
Short sway! fair Austria spreads her mournful charms,
The queen, the beauty, sets the world in arms;
From hill to hill the beacon's rousing blaze
Spreads wide the hope of plunder and of praise;
The fierce Croatian, and the wild Hussar,
With all the sons of ravage crowd the war:
The baffled prince, in honour's flatt'ring bloom
Of hasty greatness, finds the fatal doom:

His foes' derision, and his subjects' blame,
And steals to death from anguish and from shame.
Enlarge my life with multitude of days!
In health, in sickness, thus the suppliant prays:
Hides from himself his state, and shuns to know,
That life protracted is protracted woe.
Time hovers o'er, impatient to destroy,
And shuts up all the passages of joy:
In vain their gifts the bounteous seasons pour,
The fruit autumnal, and the vernal flow'r;
With listless eyes the dotard views the store,
He views, and wonders that they please no more:
Now pall the tasteless meats and joyless wines,
And Luxury with sighs her slave resigns.
Approach, ye minstrels, try the soothing strain,
Diffuse the tuneful lenitives of pain:
No sounds, alas! would touch th' impervious ear,
Though dancing mountains witness'd Orpheus near;
Nor lute nor lyre his feeble pow'rs attend,
Nor sweeter music of a virtuous friend;
But everlasting dictates crowd his tongue,
Perversely grave, or positively wrong.
The still returning tale, and ling'ring jest,
Perplex the fawning niece and pamper'd guest,
While growing hopes scarce awe the gath'ring sneer,
And scarce a legacy can bribe to hear;
The watchful guests still hint the last offence;
The daughter's petulance, the son's expense,
Improve his heady rage with treach'rous skill,
And mould his passions till they make his will.
Unnumber'd maladies his joints invade,
Lay siege to life, and press the dire blockade;

But unextinguish'd Av'rice still remains,
And dreaded losses aggravate his pains;
He turns, with anxious heart and crippled hands,
His bonds of debt, and mortgages of lands;
Or views his coffers with suspicious eyes,
Unlocks his gold, and counts it till he dies.
But grant, the virtues of a temp'rate prime
Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime;
An age that melts in unperceiv'd decay,
And glides in modest innocence away;
Whose peaceful day Benevolence endears,
Whose night congratulating Conscience cheers;
The gen'ral fav'rite as the gen'ral friend;
Such age there is, and who shall wish its end?
Yet ov'n on this her load Misfortune flings,
To press the weary minutes' flagging wings;
New sorrow rises as the day returns,
A sister sickens, or a daughter mourns.
Now kindred Merit fills the sable bier,
Now lacerated Friendship claims a tear;
Year chases year, decay pursues decay,
Still drops some joy from with'ring life away;
New forms arise, and diff'rent views engage,
Superfluous lags the vet'ran on the stage,
Till pitying Nature signs the last release,
And bids afflicted worth retire to peace.
But few there are whom hours like these await,
Who set unclouded in the gulphs of Fate.
From Lydia's monarch should the search descend,
By Solon caution'd to regard his end,
In life's last scene what prodigies surprise,
Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise!

From Marlb'rough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,
And Swift expires a driv'ler and a show.
The teeming mother, anxious for her race,
Begs for each birth the fortune of a face;
Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring;
And Sedley curs'd the form that pleas'd a king.
Ye nymphs of rosy lips and radiant eyes,
Whom Pleasure keeps too busy to be wise;
Whom joys with soft varieties invite,
By day the frolic, and the dance by night;
Who frown with vanity, who smile with art,
And ask the latent fashion of the heart;
What care, what rules, your heedless charms shall save,
Each nymph your rival, and each youth your slave?
Against your fame with fondness hate combines,
The rival batters, and the lover mines.
With distant voice neglected Virtue calls,
Less heard and less, the faint remonstrance falls;
Tir'd with contempt, she quits the slipp'ry reign,
And Pride and Prudence take her seat in vain.
In crowd at once, where none the pass defend,
The harmless freedom, and the private friend.
The guardians yield, by force superior ply'd:
To Int'rest, Prudence; and to Flatt'ry, Pride.
Here Beauty falls betray'd, despis'd, distress'd,
And hissing Infamy proclaims the rest.
Where then shall Hope and Fear their objects find?
Must dull suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
Must no dislike, alarm, no wishes rise,
No cries invoke the mercies of the skies?

deeper search, or wider survey, than others, an detected faults and follies which escape vulga observation. And the pleasure of wantoning i common topics is so tempting to a writer, tha he cannot easily resign it; a train of sentiment generally received enables him to shine withou labour, and to conquer without a contest. It is s easy to laugh at the folly of him who lives onl in idea, refuses immediate ease for distant plea sures, and, instead of enjoying the blessings o life, lets life glide away in preparations to enjo them; it affords such opportunities of triumph ant exultation, to exemplify the uncertainty of th human state, to rouse mortals from their dream and inform them of the silent celerity of time that we may believe authors willing rather t transmit than examine so advantageous a prin ciple; and more inclined to pursue a track s smooth and so flowery, than attentively to consi der whether it leads to truth.

This quality of looking forward into futurity
Yea, the unavoidable condition of a being
Still motions are gradual, and whose life
New fosive; as his powers are limited, he mus
Superfluns for the attainment of his ends, an
Till pityist what he performs last; as by con
And bids ances from his first stage of existence
But few thturally varying the horizon of hi
Who set unclomust always discover new motive
From Lydia's mc excitements of fear, and allure
By Solon caution's
In life's last scene wre which at present calls forth
Fears of the brave, and ound, when it is once gained,
means to some remoter end.

'he natural flights of the human mind are not rom pleasure to pleasure, but from hope to hope.

He that directs his steps to a certain point, must frequently turn his eyes to that place which he strives to reach; he that undergoes the fatigue of labour, must solace his weariness with the contemplation of its reward. In agriculture, one of the most simple and necessary employments, no man turns up the ground but because he thinks of the harvest, that harvest which blights may intercept, which inundations may sweep away, or which death or calamity may hinder him from reaping.

Yet as few maxims are widely received or long retained but for some conformity with truth and nature, it must be confessed, that this caution against keeping our view too intent upon remote advantages is not without its propriety or usefulness, though it may have been recited with too much levity, or enforced with too little distinction; for, not to speak of that vehemence of desire which presses through right and wrong to its gratification, or that anxious inquietude which is justly chargeable with distrust of Heaven, subjects too solemn for my present purpose; it frequently happens that, by indulging early the raptures of success, we forget the measures necessary to secure it, and suffer the imagination to riot in the fruition of some possible good, till the time of obtaining it has slipped away.

There would, however, be few enterprises of great labour or hazard undertaken, if we had not the power of magnifying the advantages which

we persuade ourselves to expect from them. When the knight of La Mancha gravely recounts to his companion the adventures by which he is to signalize himself in such a manner, that he shall be summoned to the support of empires, solicited to accept the heiress of the crown which he has preserved, have honours and riches to scatter about him, and an island to bestow on his worthy squire, very few readers, amidst their mirth or pity, can deny that they have admitted visions of the same kind; though they have not, perhaps, expected events equally strange, or by means equally inadequate. When we pity him, we reflect on our own disappointments; and when we laugh, our hearts inform us that he is not more ridiculous than ourselves, except that he tells what we have only thought.

The understanding of a man naturally sanguine, may, indeed, be easily vitiated by the luxurious indulgence of hope however necessary to the production of every thing great or excellent, as some plants are destroyed by too open exposure to that sun which gives life and beauty to the vegetable world.

Perhaps no class of the human species requires more to be cautioned against this anticipation of happiness than those that aspire to the name of authors. A man of lively fancy no sooner finds a hint moving in his mind, than he makes momentaneous excursions to the press, and to the world, and, with a little encouragement from flattery, pushes forward into future ages, and prognosticates the honours to be paid him, when envy is extinct, and faction forgotten,

and those, whom partiality now suffers to obscure him, shall have given way to the triflers of as short duration as themselves.

Those who have proceeded so far as to appeal to the tribunal of succeeding times, are not likely to be cured of their infatuation; but all endeavours ought to be used for the prevention of a disease, for which, when it has attained its height, perhaps no remedy will be found in the gardens of philosophy, however she may boast her physic of the mind, her cathartics of vice, or lenitives of passion.

I shall, therefore, while I am yet but lightly touched with the symptoms of the writer's malady, endeavour to fortify myself against the infection, not without some weak hope that my preservatives may extend their virtue to others, whose employment exposes them to the same danger.

Laudis amore tumes? Sunt certa piacula, quæ te
Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello.

Is fame your passion? Wisdom's powerful charm,
If thrice read over, shall its force disarm.

FRANCIS.

It is the sage advice of Epictetus, that a man should accustom himself often to think of what is most shocking and terrible, that by such reflections he may be preserved from too ardent wishes for seeming good, and from too much dejection in real evil.

There is nothing more dreadful to an author than neglect; compared with which, reproach, hatred, and opposition, are names of happiness;

yet this worst, this meanest fate, every one who dares to write has reason to fear.

Inunc, et versus tecum meditare canoros.

Go now, and meditate thy tuneful lays.

ELPHINSTON.

It may not be unfit for him who makes a new entrance into the lettered world, so far to suspect his own powers, as to believe that he possibly may deserve neglect; that nature may not have qualified him much to enlarge or embellish knowledge, nor sent him forth entitled by indisputable superiority to regulate the conduct of the rest of mankind; that, though the world must be granted to be yet in ignorance, he is not destined to dispel the cloud, nor to shine out as one of the luminaries of life. For this suspicion, every catalogue of a library will furnish sufficient reason; as he will find it crowded with names of men, who, though now forgotten, were once no less enterprising or confident than himself, equally pleased with their own productions, equally caressed by their patrons, and flattered by their friends

But, though it should happen that an author is capable of excelling, yet his merit may pass without notice, huddled in the variety of things, and thrown into the general miscellany of life. He that endeavours after fame by writing, solicits the regard of a multitude fluctuating in pleasures, or immersed in business, without time for intellectual amusements; he appeals to judges, pr[redacted]essed by passions, or corrupted by prejudi[redacted]which preclude their approbation

of any new performance. Some are too indolent to read any thing, till its reputation is established; others too envious to promote that fame which gives them pain by its increase. What is new is opposed, because most are unwilling to be taught; and what is known is neglected, because it is not sufficiently considered, that men more frequently require to be reminded than informed. The learned are afraid to declare their opinion early, lest they should put their reputation in hazard; the ignorant always imagine themselves giving some proof of delicacy, when they refuse to be pleased: and he that finds his way to reputation through all these obstructions, must acknowledge that he is indebted to other causes besides his industry, his learning, or his wit.

RAMBLER.

AN ALLEGORY ON CRITICISM

VIRTUS, *repulsæ nescia sordidæ,*
Intaminatis fulget honoribus,
Nec sumit aut ponit secures
Arbitrio popularis auræ.

HOR.

Undisappointed in designs,
With native honours virtue shines;
Nor takes up pow'r, nor lays it down,
As giddy rabbles smile or frown.

ELPHINSTON.

THE task of an author is, either to teach what is not known, or to recommend known truths by his manner of adorning them; either to let new

light in upon the mind, and open new scenes to the prospect, or to vary the dress and situation of common objects, so as to give them fresh grace and more powerful attractions, to spread such flowers over the regions through which the intellect has already made its progress, as may tempt it to return, and take a second view of things hastily passed over, or negligently regarded.

Either of these labours is very difficult, because that they may not be fruitless, men must not only be persuaded of their errors, but reconciled to their guide; they must not only confess their ignorance, but, what is still less pleasing, must allow that he from whom they are to learn is more knowing than themselves.

It might be imagined that such an employment was in itself sufficiently irksome and hazardous; that none would be found so malevolent as wantonly to add weight to the stone of Sisyphus; and that few endeavours would be used to obstruct those advances to reputation, which must be made at such an expense of time and thought, with so great hazard in the miscarriage, and with so little advantage from the success.

Yet there is a certain race of men, that either imagine it their duty, or make it their amusement, to hinder the reception of every work of learning, or genius, who stand as sentinels in the avenues of fame, and value themselves upon giving Ignorance and Envy the first notice of a prey.

To these men, who distinguish themselves by the appellation of Critics, it is necessary for a

new author to find some means of recommendation. It is probable, that the most malignant of these persecutors might be somewhat softened, and prevailed on, for a short time, to remit their fury. Having for this purpose considered many expedients, I find in the records of ancient times, that Argus was lulled by music, and Cerberus quieted with a sop; and am therefore inclined to believe that modern critics, who, if they have not the eyes, have the watchfulness of Argus, and can bark as loud as Cerberus, though, perhaps, they cannot bite with equal force, might be subdued by methods of the same kind. I have heard how some have been pacified with claret and a supper, and others laid asleep with the soft notes of flattery.

Though the nature of my undertaking gives me sufficient reason to dread the united attacks of this virulent generation, yet I have not hitherto persuaded myself to take any measures for flight or treaty. For I am in doubt whether they can act against me by lawful authority, and suspect that they have presumed upon a forged commission, styled themselves the ministers of Criticism, without any authentic evidence of delegation, and uttered their own determinations as the decrees of a higher judicature.

Criticism, from whom they derive their claim to decide the fate of writers, was the eldest daughter of Labour and of Truth: she was, at her birth, committed to the care of Justice, and brought up by her in the palace of Wisdom. Being soon distinguished by the celestials, for her uncommon qualities, she was appointed the governess

of Fancy, and empowered to beat time to the chorus of the Muses, when they sung before the throne of Jupiter.

When the Muses condescended to visit this lower world, they came accompanied by Criticism, to whom, upon her descent from her native regions, Justice gave a sceptre, to be carried aloft in her right hand, one end of which was tinctured with ambrosia, and inwreathed with a golden foliage of amaranths and bays; the other end was encircled with cypress and poppies, and dipped in the waters of oblivion. In her left hand she bore an unextinguishable torch, manufactured by Labour, and lighted by Truth, of which it was the particular quality immediately to show every thing in its true form, however it might be disguised to common eyes. Whatever Art could complicate, or Folly could confound, was, upon the first gleam of the torch of Truth, exhibited in its distinct parts and original simplicity; it darted through the labyrinths of sophistry, and showed at once all the absurdities to which they had recourse for refuge; it pierced through the robes which rhetoric often sold to falsehood, and detected the disproportion of parts which artificial veils had been contrived to cover.

Thus furnished for the execution of her office, Criticism came down to survey the performances of those who professed themselves the votaries of the Muses. Whatever was brought before her, she beheld by the steady light of the torch of Truth, and when her examination had convinced her, that the laws of just writing had been observed, she touched it with the amaranthine

ıd of the sceptre, and consigned it over to immortality.

But it more frequently happened, that in the orks which required her inspection, there was me imposture attempted; that false colours ere laboriously laid; that some secret inequa-.y was found between the words and sentiments, some dissimilitude of the ideas and the origial objects; that incongruities were linked together, or that some parts were of no use but to nlarge the appearance of the whole, without ontributing to its beauty, solidity, or usefulness.

Wherever such discoveries were made, and hey were made whenever these faults were committed, Criticism refused the touch which conerred the sanction of immortality, and when the rrors were frequent and gross, reversed the ceptre, and let drops of Lethe distil from the oppies and cypress, a fatal mildew, which imediately began to waste the work away, till it as at last totally destroyed.

There were some compositions brought to the st, in which, when the strongest light was rown upon them, their beauties and faults apeared so equally mingled, that Criticism stood ith her sceptre poised in her hand, in doubt hether to shed Lethe or ambrosia upon them. hese at last increased to so great a number, that e was weary of attending such doubtful claims, id for fear of using improperly the sceptre of ustice, referred the cause to be considered by ime.

The proceedings of Time, though very dila-y, were, some few caprices excepted, conformle to justice; and many who thought themselves

his scythe, as they were posting down with their volumes in triumph to futurity. It was observable that some were destroyed by little and little, and others crushed for ever by a single blow.

Criticism having long kept her eye fixed steadily upon Time, was at last so well satisfied with his conduct, that she withdrew from the earth with her patroness Astrea, and left Prejudice and False Taste to ravage at large as the associates of Fraud and Mischief; contenting herself thenceforth to shed her influence from afar upon some select minds, fitted for its reception, by learning and by virtue.

Before her departure she broke her sceptre, of which the shivers, that formed the ambrosial end, were caught up by Flattery, and those that had been infected with the waters of Lethe were, with equal haste, seized by Malevolence. The followers of Flattery, to whom she distributed her part of the sceptre, neither had nor desired light, but touched indiscriminately whatever Power or Interest happened to exhibit. The companions of Malevolence were supplied by the Furies with a torch, which had this quality peculiar to infernal lustre, that its light fell only upon faults.

> No light, but rather darkness visible,
> Serv'd only to discover sights of woe.

With these fragments of authority, the slaves of Flattery and Malevolence marched out, at the command of their mistresses, to confer immortality, or condemn to oblivion. But this sceptre had now lost its power; and Time passes his sentence at leisure, without any regard to their determinations.

THE MODERN FORM OF ROMANCES PREFERABLE TO THE ANCIENT.

Simul et jucunda et idonea dicere vitæ.—HOR.

And join both profit and delight in one.—CREECH.

'HE works of fiction, with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, are uch as exhibit life in its true state, diversified nly by accidents that daily happen in the world, nd influenced by passions and qualities which re really to be found in conversing with man-ind.

This kind of writing may be termed not improperly the comedy of romance, and is to be onducted nearly by the rules of comic poetry. ts province is to bring about natural events by asy means, and to keep up curiosity without ne help of wonder: it is therefore precluded om the machines and expedients of the heroic omance, and can neither employ giants to snatch way a lady from the nuptial rites, nor knights o bring her back from captivity; it can neither ewilder its personages in deserts, nor lodge them imaginary castles.

I remember a remark made by Scaliger upon ontanus, that all his writings are filled with the ne images; and that if you take from him his ies and his roses, his satyrs and his dryads, he ll have nothing left that can be called poetry. like manner almost all the fictions of the last

age will vanish, if you deprive them of a hermit and a wood, a battle and a shipwreck.

Why this wild strain of imagination found reception so long in polite and learned ages, it is not easy to conceive; but we cannot wonder that while readers could be procured, the authors were willing to continue it: for when a man had by practice gained some fluency of language, he had no further care than to retire to his closet, let loose his invention, and heat his mind with incredibilities; a book was thus produced without fear of criticism, without the toil of study, without knowledge of nature, or acquaintance with life.

The task of our present writers is very different; it requires, together with that learning which is to be gained from books, that experience which can never be attained by solitary diligence, but must arise from general converse and accurate observation of the living world. Their performances have, as Horace expresses it, *plus oneris quantum veniæ minus*, little indulgence, and therefore more difficulty. They are engaged in portraits of which every one knows the original, and can detect any deviation from exactness of resemblance. Other writings are safe, except from the malice of learning, but these are in danger from every common reader: as the slipper ill executed was censured by a shoemaker who happened to stop in his way at the Venus of Apelles.

But the fear of not being approved as just copiers of human manners, is not the most important concern that an author of this sort ought to

ave before him. These books are written chiefly to the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as lectures of conduct, and introductions into life. They are the entertainment of minds unfurnished with ideas, and therefore easily susceptible of impressions; not fixed by principles, and therefore easily following the current of fancy; not informed by experience, and consequently open to every false suggestion and partial account.

That the highest degree of reverence should be paid to youth, and that nothing indecent should be suffered to approach their eyes or ears, are precepts extorted by sense and virtue from an ancient writer, by no means eminent for chastity of thought. The same kind, though not the same degree of caution, is required in every thing which is laid before them, to secure them from unjust prejudices, perverse opinions, and incongruous combinations of images.

In the romances formerly written, every transaction and sentiment was so remote from all that passes among men, that the reader was in very little danger of making any applications to himself; the virtues and crimes were equally beyond his sphere of activity; and he amused himself with heroes and with traitors, deliverers and persecutors, as with beings of another species, whose actions were regulated upon motives of their own, and who had neither faults nor excellences in common with himself.

But when an adventurer is levelled with the rest of the world, and acts in such scenes of the universal drama, as may be the lot of any other

man; young spectators fix their eyes upon him with closer attention, and hope, by observing his behaviour and success, to regulate their own practices, when they shall be engaged in the like part.

For this reason, these familiar histories may perhaps be made of greater use than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions. But if the power of example is so great, as to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence, and produce effects almost without the intervention of the will, care ought to be taken, that, when the choice is unrestrained, the best examples only should be exhibited; and that which is likely to operate so strongly, should not be mischievous or uncertain in its effects.

The chief advantage which these fictions have over real life is, that their authors are at liberty, though not to invent, yet to select objects, and to cull from the mass of mankind, those individuals upon which the attention ought most to be employed: as a diamond, though it cannot be made, may be polished by art, and placed in such a situation, as to display that lustre which before was buried among common stones.

It is justly considered as the greatest excellency of art, to imitate nature; but it is necessary to distinguish those parts of nature, which are most proper for imitation: greater care is still required in representing life, which is so often discoloured by passion, or deformed by wicked-

If the world be promiscuously describ-

ed, I cannot see of what use it can be to read the account: or why it may not be as safe to turn the eye immediately upon mankind, as upon a mirror which shows all that presents itself without discrimination.

It is therefore not a sufficient vindication of a character, that it is drawn as it appears; for many characters ought never to be drawn: nor of a narrative, that the train of events is agreeable to observation and experience; for that observation which is called knowledge of the world, will be found much more frequently to make men cunning than good. The purpose of these writings is surely not only to show mankind, but to provide that they may be seen hereafter with less hazard; to teach the means of avoiding the snares which are laid by Treachery for Innocence, without infusing any wish for that superiority with which the betrayer flatters his vanity; to give the power of counteracting fraud, without the temptation to practise it; to initiate youth by mock encounters in the art of necessary defence, and to increase prudence without impairing virtue.

Many writers, for the sake of following nature, so mingle good and bad qualities in their principal personages, that they are both equally conspicuous; and as we accompany them through their adventures with delight, and are led by degrees to interest ourselves in their favour, we lose the abhorrence of their faults, because they do not hinder our pleasure, or, perhaps, regard them with some kindness, for being united with so much merit.

There have been men indeed splendidly wicked, whose endowments threw a brightness on their crimes, and whom scarce any villany made perfectly detestable, because they never could be wholly divested of their excellences; but such have been in all ages the great corrupters of the world, and their resemblance ought no more to be preserved, than the art of murdering without pain.

Some have advanced, without due attention to the consequences of this notion, that certain virtues have their correspondent faults, and therefore that to exhibit either apart is to deviate from probability. Thus men are observed by Swift to be "grateful in the same degree as they are resentful." This principle, with others of the same kind, supposes man to act from a brute impulse, and pursue a certain degree of inclination, without any choice of the object; for, otherwise, though it should be allowed that gratitude and resentment arise from the same constitution of the passions, it follows not that they will be equally indulged when reason is consulted; yet, unless that consequence be admitted, this sagacious maxim becomes an empty sound, without any relation to practice or to life.

Nor is it evident, that even the first motions to these effects are always in the same proportion. For pride, which produces quickness of resentment, will obstruct gratitude, by unwillingness to admit that inferiority which obligation implies; and it is very unlikely that he who cannot think he receives a favour, will acknowledge or repay it.

It is of the utmost importance to mankind, that positions of this tendency should be laid open and confuted; for while men consider good and evil as springing from the same root, they will spare the one for the sake of the other, and in judging, if not of others, at least of themselves, will be apt to estimate their virtues by their vices. To this fatal error all those will contribute, who confound the colours of right and wrong, and, instead of helping to settle their boundaries, mix them with so much art, that no common mind is able to disunite them.

In narratives where historical varacity has no place, I cannot discover why there should not be exhibited the most perfect idea of virtue; of virtue not angelical, nor above probability, for what we cannot credit, we shall never imitate, but the highest and purest that humanity can reach, which, exercised in such trials as the various revolutions of things shall bring upon it, may, by conquering some calamities, and enduring others, teach us what we may hope, and what we can perform. Vice, for vice is necessary to be shown, should always disgust; nor should the graces of gaiety, or the dignity of courage, be so united with it, as to reconcile it to the mind. Wherever it appears, it should raise hatred by the malignity of its practices, and contempt by the meanness of its stratagems; for while it is supported by either parts or spirit, it will be seldom heartily abhorred. The Roman tyrant was content to be hated, if he was but feared; and there are thousands of the readers of romances willing to be thought wicked, if they

may be allowed to be wits. It is therefore to be steadily inculcated, that virtue is the highest proof of understanding, and the only solid basis of greatness; and that vice is the natural consequence of narrow thoughts; that it begins in mistake, and ends in ignominy.

RAMBLER.

HAPPINESS NOT LOCAL.

Strenua nos exercet inertia, navibus atque
Quadrigis petimus bene vivere quod petis, hic est,
Est Ulubris, animus si te non deficit æquus

HOR.

Active in indolence, abroad we roam
In quest of happiness which dwells at home
With vain pursuits fatigu'd, at length you'll find,
No place excludes it from an equal mind.

LITHNSTON.

THAT man should never suffer his happiness to depend upon external circumstances, is one of the chief precepts of the stoical philosophy; a precept, indeed, which that lofty sect has extended beyond the condition of human life, and in which some of them seem to have comprised an utter exclusion of all corporeal pain and pleasure from the regard or attention of a wise man.

Such *sapientia insaniens*, as Horace calls the doctrine of another sect, such extravagance of philosophy, can want neither authority nor argument for its confutation: it is overthrown by the experience of every hour, and the powers of nature rise up against it. But we may very pro-

perly inquire, how near to this exalted state it is in our power to approach? how far we can exempt ourselves from outward influences, and secure to our minds a state of tranquillity? for, though the boast of absolute independence is ridiculous and vain, yet a mean flexibility to every impulse, and a patient submission to the tyranny of casual troubles, is below the dignity of that mind, which, however depraved or weakened, boasts its derivation from a celestial original, and hopes for an union with infinite goodness, and unvariable felicity.

Ni vitus pejora fovens
Primum deseat ortum.

Unless the soul, to vice a thrall,
Desert her own original

The necessity of erecting ourselves to some degree of intellectual dignity, and of preserving resources of pleasure, which may not be wholly at the mercy of accident, is never more apparent than when we turn our eyes upon those whom fortune has let loose to their own conduct; who, not being chained down by their condition to a regular and stated allotment of their hours, are obliged to find themselves business or diversion, and having nothing within that can entertain or employ them, are compelled to try all the arts of destroying time.

The numberless expedients practised by this class of mortals to alleviate the burthen of life, are not less shameful, nor, perhaps, much less pitiable, than those to which a trader on the edge of

bankruptcy is reduced. I have seen melancholy overspread a whole family at the disappointment of a party for cards; and when, after the proposal of a thousand schemes, and the dispatch of the footman upon a hundred messages, they have submitted, with gloomy resignation, to the misfortune of passing one evening in conversation with each other; on a sudden, such are the revolutions of the world, an unexpected visitor has brought them relief, acceptable as provision to a starving city, and enabled them to hold out till the next day.

The general remedy of those who are uneasy without knowing the cause, is change of place; they are willing to imagine that their pain is the consequence of some local inconvenience, and endeavour to fly from it, as children from their shadows; always hoping for some more satisfactory delight from every new scene, and always returning home with disappointment and complaints.

Who can look upon this kind of infatuation, without reflecting on those that suffer under the dreadful symptoms of canine madness, termed by physicians the *dread of water?* These miserable wretches, unable to drink, though burning with thrist, are sometimes known to try various contortions, or inclinations of the body, flattering themselves that they can swallow in one posture that liquor which they find in another to repel their lips.

Yet such folly is not peculiar to the thoughtless or ignorant, but sometimes seizes those minds which seem most exempted from it, by the varie-

ty of attainments, quickness of penetration, or severity of judgment; and indeed, the pride of wit and knowledge is often mortified by finding that they confer no security against the common errors, which mislead the weakest and meanest of mankind.

These reflections arose in my mind upon the remembrance of a passage in Cowley's preface to his poems, where, however exalted by genius, and enlarged by study, he informs us of a scheme of happiness, to which the imagination of a girl, upon the loss of her first lover, could have scarcely given way; but which he seems to have indulged, till he had totally forgotten its absurdity, and would probably have put in execution, had he been hindered only by his reason.

"My desire," says he, "has been for some years past, though the execution has been accidentally diverted, and does still vehemently continue, to retire myself to some of our American plantations, not to seek for gold, or enrich myself with the traffic of those parts, which is the end of most men that travel thither; but to forsake this world for ever, with all the vanities and vexations of it, and to bury myself there in some obscure retreat but not without the consolation of letters and philosophy."

Such was the chimerical provision which Cowley had made in his own mind, for the quiet of his remaining life, and which he seems to recommend to posterity, since there is no other reason for disclosing it. Surely no stronger instance can be given of a persuasion that content was the inhabitant of particular regions, and that a man

might set sail with a fair wind, and leave behind him all his cares, incumbrances, and calamities.

If he travelled so far with no other purpose than to bury himself in some obscure retreat, he might have found, in his own country, innumerable coverts sufficiently dark to have concealed the genius of Cowley; for whatever might be his opinion of the importunity with which he might be summoned back into public life, a short experience would have convinced him, that privation is easier than acquisition, and that it would require little continuance to free himself from the intrusion of the world. There is pride enough in the human heart to prevent much desire of acquaintance with a man, by whom we are sure to be neglected, however his reputation for science or virtue may excite our curiosity or esteem; so that the lover of retirement needs not be afraid lest the respect of strangers should overwhelm him with visits. Even those to whom he has formerly been known, will very patiently support his absence, when they have tried a little to live without him, and found new diversions for those moments which his company contributed to exhilarate.

It was, perhaps, ordained by Providence, to hinder us from tyrannising over one another, that no individual should be of such importance, as to cause, by his retirement or death, any chasm in the world. And Cowley had conversed to little purpose with mankind, if he had never remarked, how soon the useful friend, the gay companion, and the favoured lover, when once they are removed from before the sight, give way to the succession of new objects.

The privacy, therefore, of his hermitage might have been safe enough from violation, though he had chosen it within the limits of his native island; he might have found here preservatives against the vanities and vexations of the world, not less efficacious than those which the woods or fields of America could afford him: but having once his mind embittered with disgust, he conceived it impossible to be far enough from the cause of his uneasiness; and was posting away with the expedition of a coward, who, for want of venturing to look behind him, thinks the enemy perpetually at his heels

When he was interrupted by company, or fatigued with business, he so strongly imaged to himself the happiness of leisure and retreat, that he determined to enjoy them for the future without interruption, and to exclude for ever all that could deprive him of his darling satisfaction. He forgot, in the vehemence of desire, that solitude and quiet owe their pleasures to those miseries which he was so studious to obviate; such are the vicissitudes of the world, through all its parts, that day and night, labour and rest, hurry and retirement, endear each other; such are the changes that keep the mind in action; we desire, we pursue, we obtain, we are satiated: we desire something else, and begin a new pursuit.

If he had proceeded in his project, and fixed his habitation in the most delightful part of the new world, it may be doubted, whether his distance from the *vanities* of life would have enabled him to keep away the *vexations*. It is common for a man who feels pain, to fancy that he could

bear it better in any other part. Cowley having known the troubles and perplexities of a particular condition, readily persuaded himself that nothing worse was to be found; and that every alteration would bring some improvement: he never suspected that the cause of his unhappiness was within, that his own passions were not sufficiently regulated, and that he was harassed by his own impatience, which could never be without something to awaken it, would accompany him over the sea, and find its way to his American elysium. He would, upon the trial, have been soon convinced, that the fountain of content must spring up in the mind; and that he who has so little knowledge of human nature, as to seek happiness by changing any thing but his own dispositions, will waste his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he purposes to remove.

RAMBLER.

RETIREMENT NATURAL TO A GREAT MIND.

O qui perpetuâ mundum ratione gubernas,
Terrarum cœlique sator!——
Dejice terrenæ nebulas et pondera molis,
Atque tuo splendore mica! Tu namque serenum,
Tu requies tranquilla piis. Te cernere, finis,
Principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus, idem.

BOETHIUS.

O thou whose pow'r o'er moving worlds presides,
Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,
On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,
And cheer the clouded mind with light divine,
'Tis thine alone to calm the pious breast
With silent confidence and holy rest:
From thee, great God, we spring, to thee we tend,
Path, motive, guide, original, and end.

THE love of retirement has, in all ages, adhered closely to those minds, which have been most enlarged by knowledge, or elevated by genius. Those who enjoyed every thing generally supposed to confer happiness, have been forced to seek it in the shades of privacy. Though they possessed both power and riches, and were, therefore, surrounded by men who considered it as their chief interest to remove from them every thing that might offend their ease, or interrupt their pleasure, they have soon felt the languors of satiety, and found themselves unable to pursue the race of life without frequent respirations of intermediate solitude.

To produce this disposition, nothing appears requisite but quick sensibility and active imagination; for, though not devoted to virtue or science, the man whose faculties enable him to make ready comparisons of the present with the past, will find such a constant recurrence of the same pleasures and troubles, the same expectations and disappointments, that he will gladly snatch an hour of retreat, to let his thoughts expatiate at large, and seek for that variety in his own ideas, which the objects of sense cannot afford him.

Nor will greatness or abundance exempt him from the importunities of this desire, since, if he is born to think, he cannot restrain himself from a thousand inquiries and speculations, which he must pursue by his own reason, and which the splendour of his condition can only hinder: for those who are most exalted above dependance or control, are yet condemned to pay so large a tribute of their time to custom, ceremony, and popularity, that, according to the Greek proverb, no man in the house is more a slave than the master.

When a king asked Euclid, the mathematician, whether he could not explain his art to him in a more compendious manner? he was answered, That there was no royal way to geometry. Other things may be seized by might, or purchased with money, but knowledge is to be gained only by study, and study to be prosecuted only in retirement.

These are some of the motives which have had power to sequester kings and heroes from the crowds that soothed them with flatteries, or in-

spirited them with acclamations; but their efficacy seems confined to the higher mind, and to operate little upon the common classes of mankind, to whose conceptions the present assemblage of things is adequate, and who seldom range beyond those entertainments and vexations, which solicit their attention by pressing on their senses.

But there is a universal reason for some stated intervals of solitude, which the institutions of the church call upon me now especially to mention; a reason which extends as wide as moral duty, or the hopes of Divine favour in a future state; and which ought to influence all ranks of life, and all degrees of intellect; since none can imagine themselves not comprehended in its obligation, but such as determine to set their Maker at defiance by obstinate wickedness, or whose enthusiastic security of his approbation places them above external ordinances, and all human means of improvement.

The great task of him who conducts his life by the precepts of religion, is to make the future predominate over the present, to impress upon his mind so strong a sense of the importance of obedience to the Divine will, of the value of the reward promised to virtue, and the terrors of the punishment denounced against crimes, as may overbear all the temptations which temporal hope or fear can bring in his way, and enable him to bid equal defiance to joy and sorrow, to turn away at one time from the allurements of ambition, and push forward at another against the threats of calamity.

It is not without reason that the apostle repre

sents our passage through this stage of our existence by images drawn from the alarms and solicitude of a military life; for we are placed in such a state, that almost every thing about us conspires against our chief interest. We are in danger from whatever can get possession of our thoughts; all that can excite in us either pain or pleasure, has a tendency to obstruct the way that leads to happiness, and either to turn us aside, or retard our progress.

Our senses, our appetites, and our passions, are our lawful and faithful guides, in most things that relate solely to this life; and, therefore, by the hourly necessity of consulting them, we gradually sink into an implicit submission, and habitual confidence. Every act of compliance with their motions facilitates a second compliance, every new step towards depravity is made with less reluctance than the former, and thus the descent to life merely sensual is perpetually accelerated.

The senses have not only that advantage over conscience, which things necessary must always have over things chosen, but they have likewise a kind of prescription in their favour. We feared pain much earlier than we apprehended guilt, and were delighted with the sensations of pleasure, before we had capacities to be charmed with the beauty of rectitude. To this power, thus early established, and incessantly increasing, it must be remembered that almost every man has, in some part of his life, added new strength by a voluntary or negligent subjection of himself; for who is there that has not instigated his appetites by indulgence, or suffered them, by an unre-

sisting neutrality, to enlarge their dominion, and multiply their demands?

From the necessity of dispossessing the sensitive faculties of the influence which they must naturally gain by this pre-occupation of the soul, arises that conflict between opposite desires in the first endeavours after a religious life; which, however enthusiastically it may have been described, or however contemptuously ridiculed, will naturally be felt in some degree, though varied without end, by different tempers of mind, and innumerable circumstances of health or condition, greater or less fervour, more or fewer temptations to relapse.

From the perpetual necessity of consulting the animal faculties, in our provision for the present life, arises the difficulty of withstanding their impulses, even in cases where they ought to be of no weight; for the motions of sense are instantaneous, its objects strike unsought, we are accustomed to follow its directions, and therefore often submit to the sentence without examining the authority of the judge.

Thus it appears, upon a philosophical estimate, that, supposing the mind, at any certain time, in an equipoise between the pleasures of this life, and the hopes of futurity, present objects falling more frequently into the scale, would in time preponderate, and that our regard for an invisible state would grow every moment weaker, till at last it would lose all its activity, and become absolutely without effect.

To prevent this dreadful event, the balance is put into our own hands, and we have the power to

transfer the weight to either side. The motives to a life of holiness are infinite, not less than the favour or anger of Omnipotence, not less than eternity of happiness or misery. But these can only influence our conduct as they gain our attention, which the business or diversions of the world are always calling off by contrary attractions.

The great art therefore of piety, and the end for which all the rites of religion seem to be instituted, is the perpetual renovation of the motives to virtue, by a voluntary employment of our mind in the contemplation of its excellence, its importance, and its necessity, which, in proportion as they are more frequently and more willingly revolved, gain a more forcible and permanent influence, till in time they become the reigning ideas, the standing principles of action, and the test by which every thing proposed to the judgment is rejected or approved.

To facilitate this change of our affections, it is necessary that we weaken the temptations of the world, by retiring at certain seasons from it; for its influence arising only from its presence, is much lessened when it becomes the object of solitary meditation. A constant residence amidst noise and pleasure, inevitably obliterates the impressions of piety, and a frequent abstraction of ourselves into a state, where this life, like the next, operates only upon the reason, will reinstate religion in its just authority, even without those irradiations from above, the hope of which I have no intention to withdraw from the sincere and the diligent.

This is that conquest of the world and of ourselves, which has been always considered as the perfection of human nature; and this is only to be obtained by fervent prayer, steady resolutions, and frequent retirement from folly and vanity, from the cares of avarice, and the joys of intemperance, from the lulling sounds of deceitful flattery, and the tempting sight of prosperous wickedness.

RAMBLER.

THE THOUGHTS TO BE BROUGHT UNDER REGULATION;

AS THEY RESPECT THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

——Patitur pœnas peccandi sola voluntas;
Nam scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum,
Facti crimen habet. JUV.

For he that but conceives a crime in thought,
Contracts the danger of an actual fault. CRELCH.

IF the most active and industrious of mankind was able, at the close of life, to recollect distinctly his past moments, and distribute them in a regular account, according to the manner in which they have been spent, it is scarcely to be imagined how few would be marked out to the mind, by any permanent or visible effects, how small a proportion his real action would bear to his seeming possibilities of action, how many chasms he would find of wide and continued

vacuity, and how many interstitial spaces unfilled, even in the most tumultuous hurries of business, and the most eager vehemence of pursuit.

It is said by modern philosophers, that not only the great globes of matter are thinly scattered through the universe, but the hardest bodies are so porous, that if all matter were compressed to perfect solidity, it might be contained in a cube of a few feet. In like manner, if all the employment of life were crowded into the time it really occupied, perhaps a few weeks, days, or hours, would be sufficient for its accomplishment, so far as the mind was engaged in the performance. For such is the inequality of our corporeal to our intellectual faculties, that we contrive in minutes what we execute in years, and the soul often stands an idle spectator of the labour of the hands, and expedition of the feet.

For this reason the ancient generals often found themselves at leisure to pursue the study of philosophy in the camp; and Lucan, with historical veracity, makes Cæsar relate of himself that he noted the revolutions of the stars in the midst of preparations for battle—

> ——*Media inter prœlia semper*
> *Sidera cernebam, cœlique plagis, superisque vacavi.*
>
> Amid the storms of war, with curious eyes,
> I trace the planets and survey the skies.

That the soul always exerts her peculiar powers, with greater or less force, is very probable, though the common occasions of our present condition require but a small part of that incessant cogitation: and by the natural frame of our

bodies, and general combination of the world, we are so frequently condemned to inactivity, that as through all our time we are thinking, so for a great part of our time we can only think.

Lest a power so restless should be either unprofitably or hurtfully employed, and the superfluities of intellect run to waste, it is no vain speculation to consider how we may govern our thoughts, restrain them from irregular motions, or confine them from boundless dissipation.

How the understanding is best conducted to the knowledge of science, by what steps it is to be led forwards in its pursuit, how it is to be cured of its defects, and habituated to new studies, has been the inquiry of many acute and learned men, whose observations I shall not either adopt or censure: my purpose being to consider the moral discipline of the mind, and to promote the increase of virtue rather than of learning.

This inquiry seems to have been neglected for want of remembering, that all action has its origin in the mind, and that therefore to suffer the thoughts to be vitiated, is to poison the fountains of morality; irregular desires will produce licentious practices; what men allow themselves to wish they will soon believe, and will be at last incited to execute what they please themselves with contriving.

For this reason the casuists of the Roman church, who gain, by confession, great opportunities of knowing human nature, have generally determined that what is a crime to do, it is a crime to think. Since by revolving with pleasure the facility, safety, or advantage of a wicked

deed, a man soon begins to find his constancy relax, and his detestation soften; the happiness of success glittering before him, withdraws his attention from the atrociousness of the guilt, and acts are at last confidently perpetrated, of which the first conception only crept into the mind, disguised in pleasing complications, and permitted rather than invited.

No man has ever been drawn to crimes by love or jealousy, envy or hatred, but he can tell how easily he might at first have repelled the temptation, how readily his mind would have obeyed a call to any other object, and how weak his passion has been after some casual avocation, till he has recalled it again to his heart, and revived the viper by too warm a fondness.

Such, therefore, is the importance of keeping reason a constant guard over imagination, that we have otherwise no security for our own virtue, but may corrupt our hearts in the most recluse solitude, with more pernicious and tyrannical appetites and wishes than the commerce of the world will generally produce; for we are easily shocked by crimes which appear at once in their full magnitude; but the gradual growth of our own wickedness, endeared by interest, and palliated by all the artifices of self-deceit, gives us time to form distinctions in our own favour, and reason by degrees submits to absurdity, as the eye is in time accommodated to darkness.

In this disease of the soul, it is of the utmost importance to apply remedies at the beginning: and therefore I shall endeavour to show what thoughts are to be rejected or improved, as they

regard the past, present, or future; in hopes that some may be awakened to caution and vigilance, who perhaps, indulge themselves in dangerous dreams, so much the more dangerous, because, being yet only dreams, they are concluded innocent.

The recollection of the past is only useful by way of provision for the future; and, therefore in reviewing all occurrences that fall under a religious consideration, it is proper that a man stop at the first thoughts, to remark how he was led thither, and why he continues the reflection. If he is dwelling with delight upon a stratagem of successful fraud, a night of licentious riot, or an intrigue of guilty pleasure, let him summon off his imagination as from an unlawful pursuit, expel those passages from his remembrance, of which, though he cannot seriously approve them, the pleasure overpowers the guilt, and refer them to a future hour, when they may be considered with greater safety. Such an hour will certainly come; for the impressions of past pleasure are always lessening, but the sense of guilt, which respects futurity, continues the same.

The serious and impartial retrospect of our conduct, is indisputably necessary to the confirmation or recovery of virtue, and is, therefore, recommended under the name of self-examination, by divines, as the first act previous to repentance. It is, indeed, of so great use, that without it we should always be to begin life, be seduced for ever by the same allurements, and misled by the same fallacies. But in order that we may not lose the advantage of our experience,

we must endeavour to see every thing in its proper form, and excite in ourselves those sentiments, which the great Author of nature has decreed the concomitants or followers of good or bad actions.

Μηδ' ὕπνον μαλακοῖσιν ἐπ' ὀμμασι προσδέξασθαι,
Πρίν τῶν ἡμερινῶν ἔργων τρὶς ἕκαστον ἐπελθεῖν.
Πῆ παρέβην; τί δ' ἔρεξα; τ' μοι δέον οὐκ ἐτελέσθη;
Ἀρξάμενος δ' ἀπὸ πρωτοῦ ἐπέξιθι, καὶ μετέπειτα,
Δειλὰ μὲν ἐκπρήξας, ἐπιτλήσσεο, χρηστὰ δὲ, τέρπου.

Let not sleep (says Pythagoras) fall upon thy eyes till thou hast thrice reviewed the transactions of the past day. Where have I turned aside from rectitude? What have I been doing? What have I left undone which I ought to have done? Begin thus from the first act, and proceed; and in conclusion, at the ill which thou hast done be troubled, and rejoice for the good.

Our thoughts on present things being determined by the objects before us, fall not under those indulgences, or excursions which I am now considering. But I cannot forbear, under this head, to caution pious and tender minds, that are disturbed by the irruptions of wicked imaginations, against too great dejection, and too anxious alarms; for thoughts are only criminal, when they are first chosen, and then voluntarily continued.

Evil into the mind of God or man
May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave
No spot or stain behind.

MILTON.

In futurity chiefly are the snares lodged, by which the imagination is entangled. Futurity i

the proper abode of hope and fear, with all their train and progeny of subordinate apprehensions and desires. In futurity events and chances are yet floating at large, without apparent connexion with their causes, and we therefore easily indulge the liberty of gratifying ourselves with a pleasing choice. To pick and cull among possible advantages is, as the civil law terms it, *in vacuum venire*, to take what belongs to nobody; but it has this hazard in it, that we shall be unwilling to quit what we have seized, though an owner should be found. It is easy to think on that which may be gained, till at last we resolve to gain it, and to image the happiness of particular conditions, till we can be easy in no other. We ought, at least, to let our desires fix upon nothing in another's powers for the sake of our quiet, or in another's possession, for the sake of our innocence. When a man finds himself led, though by a train of honest sentiments, to wish for that to which he has no right, he should start back as from a pitfall covered with flowers. He that fancies he should benefit the public more in a great station than the man that fills it, will in time imagine it an act of virtue to supplant him; and as opposition readily kindles into hatred, his eagerness to do that good, to which he is not called, will betray him to crimes, which in his original scheme were never proposed.

He therefore that would govern his actions by the laws of virtue, must regulate his thoughts by those of reason; he must keep guilt from the recesses of his heart, and remember that the pleasures of fancy, and the emotions of desire, are

more dangerous as they are more hidden, since they escape the awe of observation, and operate equally in every situation, without the concurrence of external opportunities.

RAMBLER.

THE FOLLY OF ANGER.

Non Dindymene, non adytis quatit
Mentem sacerdotum incola Pythius,
Non Liber æque, non acuta
Sic geminant Corybantes æra,
Tristes ut iræ.——

HOR.

Yet O! remember not the god of wine,
Nor *Pythian Phœbus* from his inmost shrine,
Nor *Dindymene*, nor her priests possest,
Can with their sounding cymbals shake the breast,
Like furious anger.

FRANCIS.

THE maxim which Periander of Corinth, one of the seven sages of Greece, left as a memorial of his knowlege and benevolence, was χόλω κράτει, *Be master of thy anger.* He considerd anger as the great disturber of human life, the chief enemy both of public happiness and private tranquillity, and thought that he could not lay on posterity a stronger obligation to reverence his memory, than by leaving them a salutary caution against this outrageous passion.

To what latitude Periander might extend the word, the brevity of his precept will scarce allow

us to conjecture. From anger, in its full import protracted into malevolence, and exerted in revenge, arise, indeed, many of the evils to which the life of man is exposed. By anger operating upon power are produced the subversion of cities, the desolation of countries, the massacre of nations, and all those dreadful and astonishing calamities which fill the histories of the world, and which could not be read at any distant point of time, when the passions stand neutral, and every motive and principle is left to its natural force, without some doubt of the truth of the relation, did we not see the same causes still tending to the same effects, and only acting with less vigour for want of the same concurrent opportunities.

But this gigantic and enormous species of anger falls not properly under the animadversion of a writer, whose chief end is the regulation of common life, and whose precepts are to recommend themselves by their general use. Nor is this essay intended to expose the tragical or fatal effects even of private malignity. The anger which I propose now for my subject, is such as makes those who indulge it more troublesome than formidable, and ranks them rather with hornets and wasps, than with basilisks and lions. I have, therefore, prefixed a motto which characterises this passion, not so much by the mischief that it causes, as by the noise that it utters.

There is in the world a certain class of mortals known, and contentedly known, by the appellation of passionate men, who imagine themselves entitled by that distinction to be provoked on

every slight occasion, and to vent their rage in vehement and fierce vociferations, in furious menaces, and licentious reproaches. Their rage, indeed, for the most part, fumes away in outcries of injury, and protestations of vengeance, and seldom proceeds to actual violence, unless a drawer or linkboy falls in their way; but they interrupt the quiet of those that happen to be within the reach of their clamours, obstruct the course of conversation, and disturb the enjoyment of society.

Men of this kind are sometimes not without understanding or virtue, and are, therefore, not always treated with the severity with their neglect of the ease of all about them might justly provoke; they have obtained a kind of prescription for their folly, and are considered by their companions as under a predominant influence, that leaves them not masters of their conduct or language, as acting without consciousness, and rushing into mischief with a mist before their eyes; they are therefore pitied rather than censured, and their sallies are passed over as the involuntary blows of a man agitated by the spasms of a convulsion.

It is surely not to be observed without indignation, that men may be found of minds mean enough to be satisfied with this treatment: wretches who are proud to obtain the privilege of madmen, and can, without shame, and without regret, consider themselves as receiving hourly pardons from their companions, and giving them continual opportunities of exercising their patience, and boasting their clemency.

Pride is undoubtedly the original of anger; but pride, like every other passion, if it once breaks loose from reason, counteracts its own purposes. A passionate man, upon the review of his day, will have very few gratifications to offer to his pride, when he has considered how his outrages were caused, why they were borne, and in what they are likely to end at last.

Those sudden bursts of rage generally break out upon small occasions; for life, unhappy as it is, cannot supply great evils as frequently as the man of fire thinks it fit to be enraged; therefore the first reflection upon his violence, must show him that he is mean enough to be driven from his post by every petty incident, that he is the mere slave of casualty, and that his reason and virtue are in the power of the wind.

One motive there is of these loud extravagances, which a man is careful to conceal from others, and does not always discover to himself. He that finds his knowledge narrow, and his arguments weak, and by consequence his suffrage not much regarded, is sometimes in hope of gaining that attention by his clamours which he cannot otherwise obtain, and is pleased with remembering, that at least he made himself heard, that he had the power to interrupt those whom he could not confute, and suspend the decision which he could not guide.

Of this kind is the fury to which many men give way among their servants and domestics; they feel their own ignorance, they see their own insignificance; and therefore they endeavour, by their fury, to fright away contempt from before

them, when they know it must follow them behind, and think themselves eminently masters, when they see one folly tamely complied with, only lest refusal or delay should provoke them to a greater.

These temptations cannot but be owned to have some force. It is so little pleasing to any man to see himself wholly overlooked in the mass of things that he may be allowed to try a few expedients for procuring some kind of supplemental dignity, and use some endeavour to add weight, by the violence of his temper, to the lightness of his other powers. But this has now been long practised, and found, upon the most exact estimate, not to produce advantages equal to its inconvenience; for it appears not that a man can by uproar, tumult, and bluster, alter any one's opinion of his understanding, or gain influence, except over those whom fortune or nature have made his dependents. He may, by a steady perseverance in his ferocity, fright his children, and harass his servants, but the rest of the world will look on and laugh; and he will have the comfort at last of thinking, that he lives only to raise contempt and hatred, emotions to which wisdom and virtue would be always unwilling to give occasion. He has contrived only to make those fear him, whom every reasonable being is endeavouring to endear by kindness, and must content himself with the pleasure of a triumph obtained by trampling on them who [illegible] not resist. He must perceive that the apprehension which his presence causes is not the awe of his virtue, but the dread of his brutality,

and that he has given up the felicity of being loved, without gaining the honour of being reverenced.

But this is not the only ill consequence of the frequent indulgence of this blustering passion, which a man, by often calling to his assistance, will teach in a short time, to intrude before the summons, to rush upon him with resistless violence, and without any previous notice of its approach. He will find himself liable to be inflamed at the first touch of provocation, and unable to retain his resentment, till he has a full conviction of the offence, to proportion his anger to the cause, or to regulate it by prudence or by duty. When a man has once suffered his mind to be thus vitiated, he becomes one of the most hateful and unhappy beings. He can give no security to himself that he shall not, at the next interview, alienate by some sudden transport his dearest friend; or break out, upon some slight contradiction, into such terms of rudeness as can never be perfectly forgotten. Whoever converses with him, lives with the suspicion and solicitude of a man that plays with a tame tiger, always under a necessity of watching the moment in which the capricious savage shall begin to growl.

It is told by Prior, in a panegyric on the Earl of Dorset, that his servants used to put themselves in his way when he was angry, because he was sure to recompense them for any indignities which he made them suffer. This is round of a passionate man's life; he contracts debts when he is furious, which his virtue, if he

has virtue, obliges him to discharge at the return of reason. He spends his time in outrage and acknowledgment, injury and reparation. Or, if there be any who hardens himself in oppression, and justifies the wrong because he has done it, his insensibility can make small part of his praise, or his happiness; he only adds deliberate to hasty folly, aggravates petulance by contumacy, and destroys the only plea that he can offer for the tenderness and patience of mankind.

Yet even this degree of depravity we may be content to pity, because it seldom wants a punishment equal to its guilt. Nothing is more despicable or more miserable than the old age of a passionate man. When the vigour of youth fails him, and his amusements pall with frequent repetition, his occasional rage sinks by decay of strength into peevishness; that peevishness, for want of novelty and variety, becomes habitual: the world falls off from around him, and he is left, as Homer expresses it, φθινυθων φιλον κηρ, to devour his own heart in solitude and contempt.

RAMBLER.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN AUTHOR'S WRITINGS AND HIS CONVERSATION.

———*Nil fuit unquam*
Sic impar sibi ——— HOR.

Sure such a various creature ne'er was known.
FRANCIS.

AMONG the many inconsistencies which folly produces, or infirmity suffers, in the human mind, there has often been observed a manifest and striking contrariety between the life of an author and his writings; and Milton, in a letter to a learned stranger, by whom he had been visited, with great reason congratulates himself upon the consciousness of being found equal to his own character, and having preserved in a private and familiar interview, that reputation which his works had procured him.

Those whom the appearance of virtue, or the evidence of genius, have tempted to a nearer knowledge of the writer in whose performances they may be found, have indeed had frequent reason to repent their curiosity; the bubble that sparkled before them has become common water at the touch; the phantom of perfection has vanished when they wished to press it to their bosom. They have lost the pleasure of imagining how far humanity may be exalted, and,

perhaps, felt themselves less inclined to toil up the steeps of virtue, when they observe those who seem best able to point the way, loitering below, as either afraid of the labour, or doubtful of the reward.

It has been long the custom of the oriental monarchs to hide themselves in gardens and palaces, to avoid the conversation of mankind, and to be known to their subjects only by their edicts. The same policy is no less necessary to him that writes, than to him that governs; for men would not more patiently submit to be taught than commanded, by one known to have the same follies and weaknesses with themselves. A sudden intruder into the closet of an author would perhaps feel equal indignation with the officer, who having long solicited admission into the presence of Sardanapalus, saw him not consulting upon laws, inquiring into grievances, or modelling armies, but employed in feminine amusements, and directing the ladies in their work.

It is not difficult to conceive, however, that for many reasons a man writes much better than he lives. For without entering into refined speculations, it may be shown much easier to design than to perform. A man proposes his schemes of life in a state of abstraction and disengagement, exempt from the enticements of hope, the solicitations of affection, the importunities of appetite, or the depressions of fear, and is in the same state with him that teaches upon land the art of navigation, to whom the sea is always smooth, and the wind always prosperous.

The mathematicians are well acquainted with

the difference between pure science, which has to do only with ideas, and the application of its laws to the use of life, in which they are constrained to submit to the imperfection of matter and the influence of accidents. Thus, in moral discussions, it is to be remembered, that many impediments obstruct our practice, which very easily give way to theory. The speculatist is only in danger of erroneous reasoning, but the man involved in life has his own passions and those of others to encounter, and is embarrassed with a thousand inconveniences which confound him with variety of impulse, and either perplex or obstruct his way. He is forced to act without deliberation, and obliged to choose before he can examine; he is surprised by sudden alterations of the state of things, and changes his measures according to superficial appearances; he is led by others, either because he is indolent, or because he is timorous; he is sometimes afraid to know what is right, and sometimes finds friends or enemies diligent to deceive him.

We are, therefore, not to wonder that most fail, amidst tumult, and snares, and danger, in the observance of those precepts, which they lay down in solitude, safety, and tranquillity, with a mind unbiassed, and with liberty unobstructed. It is the conditon of our present state to see more than we can attain; the exactest vigilance and caution can never maintain a single day of unmingled innocence, much less can the utmost efforts of incorporated mind reach the summits of speculative virtue.

It is, however, necessary for the idea of perfec-

tion to be proposed, that we may have some o
ject to which our endeavours are to be directe
and he that is the most deficient in the duties
life, makes some atonement for his faults, if h
warns others against his own failings, and hi
ders, by the salubrity of his admonitions, t
contagion of his example.

Nothing is more unjust, however commo
than to charge with hypocrisy him that express
zeal for those virtues which he neglects to pra
tise: since he may be sincerely convinced of t
advantages of conquering his passions, witho
having yet obtained the victory, as a man m
be confident of the advantage of a voyage, or
journey, without having courage or industry
undertake it, and may honestly recommend
others those attempts which he neglects himsel

The interest which the corrupt part of ma
kind have in hardening themselves against eve
motive to amendment, has disposed them to gi
to these contradictions, when they can be produ
ed against the cause of virtue, that weight whi
they will not allow them in any other case. Th
see men act in opposition to their interest, wit
out supposing that they do not know it; tho
who give way to the sudden violence of passio
and forsake the most important pursuits f
petty pleasures, are not supposed to have chan
ed their opinions, or to approve their own co
duct. In moral or religious questions alone, the
determine the sentiments by the actions, an
charge every man with endeavouring to impo
upon the world, whose writings are not confirme
by his life. They never consider that they then

selves neglect or practise something every day inconsistently with their own settled judgment, nor discover that the conduct of the advocates for virtue can little increase or lessen the obligations of their dictates: argument is to be invalidated only by argument, and is in itself of the same force, whether or not it convinces him by whom it is proposed.

Yet since this prejudice, however unreasonable, is always likely to have some prevalence, it is the duty of every man to take care lest he should hinder the efficacy of his own instructions. When he desires to gain the belief of others, he should show that he believes himself; and when he teaches the fitness of virtue by his reasonings, he should, by his example, prove its possibility. Thus much at least may be required of him, that he shall not act worse than others, because he writes better; nor imagine that, by the merit of his genius, he may claim indulgence beyond mortals of the lower classes, and be excused for want of prudence, or neglect of virtue.

Bacon, in his history of the winds, after having offered something to the imagination as desirable, often proposes lower advantages in its place to the reason as attainable. The same method may be sometimes pursued in moral endeavours, which this philosopher has observed in natural inquiries; having first set positive and absolute excellence before us, we may be pardoned though we sink down to humbler virtue, trying, however, to keep our point always in view, and struggling not to lose ground, though we cannot gain it.

It is recorded of Sir Matthew Hale, that he, for a long time, concealed the consecration of himself to the stricter duties of religion, lest, by some flagitious and shameful action, he should bring piety into disgrace. For the same reason it may be prudent for a writer, who apprehends that he shall not enforce his own maxims by his domestic character, to conceal his name that he may not injure them.

There are, indeed, a great number whose curiosity to gain a more familiar knowledge of successful writers, is not so much prompted by an opinion of their power to improve as to delight, and who expect from them not arguments against vice, or dissertations on temperance or justice, but flights of wit, and sallies of pleasantry, or, at least, acute remarks, nice distinctions, justness of sentiment, and elegance of diction.

This expectation is, indeed, specious and probable, and yet, such is the fate of all human hopes, that it is very often frustrated, and those who raise admiration by their books, disgust by their company. A man of letters, for the most part spends, in the privacies of study, that season of life in which the manners are to be softened into ease, and polished into elegance; and, when he has gained knowledge enough to be respected, has neglected the minuter acts by which he might have pleased. When he enters life, if his temper be soft and timorous, he is diffident and bashful, from the knowledge of his defects; or if he was born with spirit and resolution, he is ferocious and arrogant, from the consciousness of his merit: [illegible]ther dissipated by the awe of company,

and unable to recollect his reading, and arrange his arguments; or he is hot and dogmatical, quick in opposition, and tenacious in defence, disabled by his own violence, and confused by his haste to triumph.

The graces of writing and conversation are of different kinds: and though he who excels in one might have been, with opportunities and application, equally successful in the other, yet as many please by extemporary talk, though utterly unacquainted with the more accurate method, and more laboured beauties, which composition requires; so it is very possible that men, wholly accustomed to works of study, may be without that readiness of conception and affluence of language, always necessary to colloquial entertainment. They may want address to watch the hints which conversation offers for the display of their particular attainments, or they may be so much unfurnished with matter on common subjects, that discourse not professedly literary glides over them as heterogeneous bodies, without admitting their conceptions to mix in the circulation.

A transition from an author's book to his conversation, is too often like an entrance into a large city, after a distant prospect. Remotely, we see nothing but spires of temples and turrets of palaces, and imagine it the residence of splendour, grandeur, and magnificence; but, when we have passed the gates, we find it perplexed with narrow passages, disgraced with despicable cottages, embarrassed with obstructions, and clouded with smoke.

RAMBLER.

THE DANGERS AND MISERIES OF A LITERARY EMINENCE.

———*Torrens dicendi copia multis,*
Et sua mortifera est facundia———

JUV.

Some who the depths of eloquence have found,
In that unnavigable stream were drown'd.

DRYDEN.

SIR,

I AM the modest young man whom you favoured with your advice in a late paper; and, as I am very far from suspecting that you foresaw the numberless inconveniences which I have, by following it, brought upon myself, I will lay my condition open before you, for you seem bound to extricate me from the perplexities in which your counsel, however innocent in the intention, has contributed to involve me.

——*Facilis descensus Averni,*
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis,

VIRG.

The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way.

DRYDEN.

The means of doing hurt to ourselves are always at hand. I immediately sent to a printer, and contracted with him for an impression of several thousands of my pamphlet. While it was at the press, I was seldom absent from the

printing-house, and continually urged the workmen to haste, by solicitations, promises, and rewards. From the day all other pleasures were excluded, by the delightful employment of correcting the sheets; and from the night, sleep was generally banished, by anticipations of the happiness which every hour was bringing nearer.

At last the time of publication approached, and my heart beat with the raptures of an author. I was above all little precautions, and, in defiance of envy or of criticism, set my name upon the title, without sufficiently considering, that what has once passed the press is irrevocable; and that though the printing-house may properly be compared to the infernal regions, for the facility of its entrance, and the difficulty with which authors return from it; yet there is this difference, that a great genius can never return to his former state by a happy draught of the waters of oblivion.

I am now, Mr. Rambler, known to be an author, and am condemned, irreversibly condemned, to all the miseries of high reputation. The first morning after publication my friends assembled about me. I presented each, as is usual, with a copy of my book. They looked into the first pages, but were hindered, by their admiration, from reading further. The first pages are, indeed, very elaborate. Some passages they particularly dwelt upon, as more eminently beautiful than the rest; and some delicate strokes, and secret elegances, I pointed out to them which had escaped their observation. I then begged of them to forbear their compliments,

and invited them, I could do no less, to dine with me at a tavern. After dinner, the book was resumed; but their praises very often so much overpowered my modesty, that I was forced to put about the glass, and had often no means of repressing the clamours of their admiration, but by thundering to the drawer for another bottle.

Next morning another set of my acquaintance congratulated me upon my performance, with such importunity of praise, that I was again forced to obviate their civilities by a treat. On the third day, I had yet a greater number of applauders to put to silence in the same manner; and, on the fourth, those whom I had entertained the first day came again, having, in the perusal of the remaining part of the book, discovered so many forcible sentences and masterly touches, that it was impossible for me to bear the repetition of their commendations. I therefore persuaded them once more to adjourn to the tavern, and choose some other subject, on which I might share in their conversation. But it was not in their power to withhold their attention from my performance, which had so entirely taken possession of their minds, that no entreaties of mine could change their topic, and I was obliged to stifle, with claret, that praise, which neither my modesty could hinder, nor my uneasiness repress.

The whole week was thus spent in a kind of literary revel, and I have now found that nothing is so expensive as great abilities, unless there is joined with them an insatiable eagerness of praise; for to escape from the pain of hearing

myself exalted above the greatest names, dead and living, of the learned world, it has already cost me two hogsheads of port, fifteen gallons of arrack, ten dozen of claret, and five-and-forty bottles of champagne.

I was resolved to stay at home no longer, and therefore rose early and went to the coffee-house; but found that I had now made myself too eminent for happiness, and that I was no longer to enjoy the pleasure of mixing, upon equal terms, with the rest of the world. As soon as I entered the room, I see part of the company raging with envy, which they endeavour to conceal, sometimes with the appearance of laughter, and sometimes with that of contempt; but the disguise is such, that I can discover the secret rancour of their hearts, and as envy is deservedly its own punishment, I frequently indulge myself in tormenting them with my presence.

But, though there may be some slight satisfaction received from the mortification of my enemies, yet my benevolence will not suffer me to take any pleasure in the terrors of my friends. I have been cautious, since the appearance of my work, not to give myself more premeditated airs of superiority, than the most rigid humility might allow. It is, indeed, not impossible that I may sometimes have laid down my opinion, in a manner that showed a consciousness of my ability to maintain it, or interrupted the conversation, when I saw its tendency, without suffering the speaker to waste his time in explaining his sentiments and indeed I did indulge myself for two days in a custom of drumming with my fingers, when

the company began to lose themselves in absurdities or to encroach upon subjects which I knew them unqualified to discuss." But I generally acted with great appearance of respect, even to those whose stupidity I pitied in my heart. Yet, notwithstanding this exemplary moderation, so universal is the dread of uncommon powers, and such the unwillingness of mankind to be made wiser, that I have now for some days found myself shunned by all my acquaintance. If I knock at a door, nobody is at home; if I enter a coffee-house, I have the box to myself. I live in the town like a lion in his desert, or an eagle on his rock, too great for friendship or society, and condemned to solitude by unhappy elevation and dreaded ascendancy.

Nor is my character only formidable to others, but burdensome to myself. I naturally love to talk without much thinking, to scatter my merriment at random, and to relax my thoughts with ludicrous remarks and fanciful images; but such is now the importance of my opinion, that I am afraid to offer it, lest, by being established too hastily into a maxim, it should be the occasion of error to half the nation; and such is the expectation with which I am attended, when I am going to speak, that I frequently pause to reflect, whether what I am about to utter is worthy of myself.

This, Sir, is sufficiently miserable; but there are still greater calamities behind. You must have read in Pope and Swift how men of parts have had their closets rifled, and their cabinets opened, at the instigation of piratical book-

sellers, for the profit of their works; and it is apparent that there are many prints now sold in shops, of men whom you cannot suspect of sitting for that purpose, and whose likenesses must have been certainly stolen when their names made their faces vendible. These considerations at first put me on my guard, and I have, indeed, found sufficient reason for my caution, for I have discovered many people examining my countenance, with a curiosity that showed their intention to draw it; I immediately left the house but find the same behaviour in another.

Others may be persecuted, but I am haunted; I have good reason to believe that eleven painers are now dogging me, for they know that he who can get my face first, will make his fortune. I often change my wig, and wear my hat over my eyes, by which I hope somewhat to confound them; for you know it is not fair to sell my face, without admitting me to share the profit.

I am, however, not so much in pain for my face as for my papers, which I dare neither carry with me nor leave behind. I have, indeed, taken some measures for their preservation; having put them in an iron chest, and fixed a padlock upon my closet. I change my lodgings five times a week, and always remove at the dead of night.

Thus I live, in consequence of having given oo great proofs of a predominant genius, in the olitude of a hermit, with the anxiety of a miser, nd the caution of an outlaw; afraid to show my ace lest it should be copied; afraid to speak,

lest I should injure my character; and to write, lest my correspondents should publish my letters; always uneasy lest my servants should steal my papers, for the sake of money, or my friends for that of the public. This it is to soar above the rest of mankind; and this representation I lay before you, that I may be informed how to divest myself of the laurels which are so cumbersome to the wearer, and descend to the enjoyment of that quiet, from which I find a writer of the first class so fatally debarred.

RAMBLER.

THE DANGER OF RANGING FROM ONE STUDY TO ANOTHER.

Dum te causidicum, dum te modo rhetora fingis,
Et non dedecuis Taure, *quid esse velis,*
Peleos *et* Priami *transit, vel* Nestoris *ætas,*
Et serum fuerat jam tibi desinere ——
Eja, age, rumpe moras, quo te spectabimus usque?
Dum quid sis dubitas, potes esse nihil.—MART.

To rhetoric now, and now to law inclin'd,
Uncertain where to fix thy changing mind;
Old *Priam's* age or *Nestor's* may be out,
And thou, O *Taurus!* still go on in doubt.
Come then, how long such wavering shall we see?
Thou may'st doubt on: thou now canst nothing be.

F. LEWIS.

It is never without very melancholy reflections, that we can observe the misconduct, or miscarriage, of those men, who seem, by the force of understanding, or extent of knowledge, exempted from the general frailties of human nature,

and privileged from the common infelicities of life. Though the world is crowded with scenes of calamity, we look upon the general mass of wretchedness with very little regard, and fix our eyes upon the state of particular persons, whom the eminence of their qualities marks out from the multitude; as in reading an account of a battle, we seldom reflect on the vulgar heaps of slaughter, but follow the hero with our whole attention, through all the varieties of his fortune, without a thought of the thousands that are falling round him.

With the same kind of anxious veneration I have for many years been making observations on the life of Polyphilus, a man whom all his acquaintances have, from his first appearance in the world, feared for the quickness of his discernment, and admired for the multiplicity of his attainments, but whose progress in life, and usefulness to mankind, has been hindered by the superfluity of his knowledge, and the celerity of his mind.

Polyphilus was remarkable, at school, for surpassing all his companions, without any visible application, and at the university was distinguished equally for his successful progress, as well through the thorny mazes of science, as the flowery path of polite literature, without any strict confinement to hours of study, or remarkable forbearance of the common amusements of young men.

When Polyphilus was at the age in which men usually choose their profession, and prepare to enter into a public character, every academical

eye was fixed upon him; all were curious to inquire what this universal genius would fix upon for the employment of his life; and no doubt was made but that he would leave all his contemporaries behind him, and mount to the highest honours of that class in which he should enlist himself, without those delays and pauses which must be endured by meaner abilities.

Polyphilus, though by no means insolent or assuming, had been sufficiently encouraged by uninterrupted success, to place great confidence in his own parts; and was not below his companions in the indulgence of his hopes, and expectations of the astonishment with which the world would be struck, when first his lustre should break out upon it; nor could he forbear (for whom does not constant flattery intoxicate?) to join sometimes in the mirth of his friends, at the sudden disappearance of those, who, having shone awhile, and drawn the eyes of the public upon their feeble radiance, were now doomed to fade away before him.

It is natural for a man to catch advantageous notions of the condition which those with whom he converses are striving to attain. Polyphilus, in a ramble to London, fell accidentally among the physicians, and was so much pleased with the prospect of turning philosophy to profit, and so highly delighted with a new theory of fevers which darted into his imagination, and which, after having considered it a few hours, he found himself able to maintain against all the advocates for the ancient system, that he resolved to apply himself to anatomy, botany, and chemistry, and

to leave no part unconquered, either of the animal, mineral, or vegetable kingdoms.

He therefore read authors, constructed systems, and tried experiments; but unhappily, as he was going to see a new plant in flower at Chelsea, he met, in crossing Westminster to take water, the chancellor's coach; he had the curiosity to follow him into the hall, where a remarkable cause happened to be tried, and found himself able to produce so many arguments, which the lawyers had omitted on both sides, that he determined to quit physic for a profession in which he found it would be so easy to excel, and which promised higher honours, and larger profits, without melancholy attendance upon misery, mean submission to peevishness, and continual interruption of rest and pleasure.

He immediately took chambers in the Temple, bought a common-place book, and confined himself for some months to the perusal of the statutes, year-books, pleadings, and reports; he was a constant hearer of the courts, and began to put cases with reasonable accuracy. But he soon discovered, by considering the fortune of lawyers, that preferment was not to be got by acuteness, learning, and eloquence. He was perplexed by the absurdities of attornies, and misrepresentations made by his clients of their own causes, by the useless anxiety of one, and the incessant importunity of another; he began to repent of having devoted himself to a study, which was so narrow in its comprehension, that it could never carry his name to any other country, and thought it unworthy of a man of parts to sell his life only

for money. The barrenness of his fellow-students forced him generally into other company at his hours of entertainment, and among the varieties of conversation through which his curiosity was daily wandering, he, by chance, mingled at a tavern with some intelligent officers of the army. A man of letters was easily dazzled with the gaiety of their appearance, and softened into kindness by the politeness of their address; he, therefore, cultivated this new acquaintance, and when he saw how readily they found in every place admission and regard, and how familiarly they mingled with every rank and order of men, he began to feel his heart beat for military honours, and wondered how the prejudices of the university should make him so long insensible of that ambition, which has fired so many hearts in every age, and negligent of that calling, which is, above all others, universally and invariably illustrious, and which gives, even to the exterior appearance of its professors, a dignity and freedom unknown to the rest of mankind.

These favourable impressions were made still deeper by his conversation with ladies, whose regard for soldiers he could not observe, without wishing himself one of that happy fraternity, to which the female world seemed to have devoted their charms and their kindness. The love of knowledge, which was still his predominant inclination, was gratified by the recital of advantures, and accounts of foreign countries; and therefore he concluded that there was no way of life in which all his views could so completely concentre as in that of a soldier. In the art of

war he thought it not difficult to excel, having observed his new friends not very much versed in the principles of tactics or fortification; he therefore studied all the military writers, both ancient and modern, and, in a short time, could tell how to have gained every remarkable battle that has been lost from the beginning of the world. He often showed at table how Alexander should have been checked in his conquests, what was the fatal error at Pharsalia, how Charles of Sweden might have escaped his ruin at Pultowa, and Marlborough might have been made to repent his temerity at Blenheim. He entrenched armies upon paper so that no superiority of numbers could force them, and modelled in clay many impregnable fortresses, on which all the present arts of attack would be exhausted without effect.

Polyphilus, in a short time, obtained a commission; but, before he could rub off the solemnity of a scholar, and gain the true air of military vivacity, a war was declared, and forces sent to the continent. Here Polyphilus unhappily found that study alone would not make a soldier; for being much accustomed to think, he let the sense of danger sink into his mind, and felt at the approach of any action, that terror which a sentence of death would have brought upon him. He saw that, instead of conquering their fears, the endeavour of his gay friends was only to escape them; but his philosophy chained his mind to its object, and rather loaded him with shackles than furnished him with arms. He, however, suppressed his misery in silence, and

passed through the campaign with honour, but found himself utterly unable to support another.

He then had recourse again to his books, and continued to range from one study to another. As I usually visit him once a month, and am admitted to him without previous notice, I have found him within this last half year decyphering the Chinese language, making a farce, collecting a vocabulary of the obsolete terms of the English law, writing an inquiry concerning the ancient Corinthian brass, and forming a new scheme of the variations of the needle.

Thus is this powerful genius, which might have extended the sphere of any science, or benefited the world in any profession, dissipated in a boundless variety, without profit to others or himself: He makes sudden irruptions into the regions of knowledge, and sees all obstacles give way before him: but he never stays long enough to complete his conquest, to establish laws, or bring away the spoils.

Such is often the folly of men, whom nature has enabled to obtain skill and knowledge, on terms so easy, that they have no sense of the value of the acquisition; they are qualified to make such speedy progress in learning, that they think themselves at liberty to loiter in the way, and by turning aside after every new object, lose the race, like Atalanta, to slower competitors, who press diligently forward, and whose force is directed to a single point.

I have often thought those happy that have been fixed, from the first dawn of thought, in a determination to some state of life, by the choice

of one whose authority may preclude caprice, and whose influence may prejudice them in favour of his opinion. The general precept of consulting the genius is of little use, unless we are told how the genius can be known. If it is to be discovered only by experiment, life will be lost before the resolution can be fixed; if any other indications are to be found, they may, perhaps, be very early discerned. At least, if to miscarry in an attempt be a proof of having mistaken the direction of the genius, men appear not less frequently deceived with regard to themselves than to others; and therefore no one has much reason to complain that his life was planned out by his friends, or to be confident that he should have had either more honour or happiness, by being abandoned to the chance of his own fancy.

It was said of the learned Bishop Sanderson, that when he was preparing his lectures, he hesitated so much, and rejected so often, that, at the time of reading, he was often forced to produce, not what was best, but what happened to be at hand. This will be the state of every man, who, in the choice of his employment, balances all the arguments on every side; the complication is so intricate, the motives and objections so numerous, there is so much play for the imagination, and so much remains in the power of others, that reason is forced at last to rest in neutrality, the decision devolves into the hands of chance, and after a great part of life spent in inquiries which can never be resolved, the rest must often pass in repenting the unnecessary delay, and can be

useful to few other purposes than to warn others against the same folly, and to show, that of two states of life equally consistent with religion and virtue, he who chooses earliest chooses best.

RAMBLER.

AN ALLEGORY ON WIT & LEARNING.

——Egno nec studium sine divite vena
Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium; alterius sic
Altera poscit opem res et conjurat amice.

HOR.

Without a genius learning soars in vain;
And without learning genius sinks again;
Their force united crowns the sprightly reign.

ELPHINSTON.

WIT and Learning were the children of Apollo, by different mothers: Wit was the offspring of Euphrosyne, and resembled her in cheerfulness and vivacity; Learning was born of Sophia, and retained her seriousness and caution. As their mothers were rivals, they were bred up by them from their birth in habitual opposition, and all means were so incessantly employed to impress upon them a hatred and contempt of each other, that though Apollo, who foresaw the ill effects of their discord, endeavoured to soften them, by dividing his regard equally between them, yet his impartiality and kindness were without effect; the mater[illegible] animosity was deeply rooted, having been intermingled with their first ideas, and was confirmed every hour, as fresh opportunities occurred of exerting it. No sooner were they o[illegible]

age to be received into the apartments of the other celestials, than Wit began to entertain Venus at her toilet, by aping the solemnity of Learning, and Learning to divert Minerva at her loom, by exposing the blunders and ignorance of Wit.

Thus they grew up with malice perpetually increasing, by the encouragement which each received from those whom their mothers had persuaded to patronise and support them; and longed to be admitted to the table of Jupiter, not so much for the hope of gaining honour, as of excluding a rival from all pretensions to regard, and of putting an everlasting stop to the progress of that influence which either believed the other to have obtained by mean arts and false appearances.

At last the day came, when they were both, with the usual solemnities, received into the class of superior deities, and allowed to take nectar from the hand of Hebe. But from that hour Concord lost her authority at the table of Jupiter. The rivals, animated by their new dignity, and incited by the alternate applauses of the associate powers, harassed each other by incessant contests, with such a regular vicissitude of victory, that neither was depressed.

It was observable, that at the beginning of every debate, the advantage was on the side of Wit; and that, at the first sallies, the whole assembly sparkled, according to Homer's expression, with unextinguishable merriment. But Learning would reserve her strength till the burst of applause was over, and the languor with which

the violence of joy is always succeeded, began to promise more calm and patient attention. She then attempted her defence, and by comparing one part of her antagonist's objections with another, commonly made him confute himself; or, by showing how small a part of the question he had taken into his view, proved that his opinion could have no weight. The audience began gradually to lay aside their prepossessions, and rose, at last, with greater veneration for Learning, but with greater kindness for Wit.

Their conduct was, whenever they desired to recommend themselves to distinction, entirely opposite. Wit was daring and adventurous; Learning cautious and deliberate. Wit thought nothing reproachful but dulness; Learning was afraid of no imputation but that of error. Wit answered before he understood, lest his quickness of apprehension should be questioned; Learning paused, where there was no difficulty, least any insidious sophism should lie undiscovered. Wit perplexed every debate by rapidity and confusion; Learning tired the hearers with endless distinctions, and prolonged the dispute without advantage, by proving that which never was denied. Wit, in hopes of shining, would venture to produce what he had not considered, and often succeeded beyond his own expectation, by following the train of a lucky thought; Learning would reject every new notion, for fear of being entangled in consequences which she could not foresee, and was often hindered, by her caution, from pressing her advantages, and subduing her opponent

Both had prejudices, which in some degree hindered their progress towards perfection, and left them open to attacks. Novelty was the darling of Wit, and antiquity of Learning. To Wit, all that was new was specious; to Learning, whatever was ancient was venerable. Wit, however, seldom failed to divert those whom he could not convince, and to convince was not often his ambition; Learning always supported her opinion with so many collateral truths, that, when the cause was decided against her, her arguments were remembered with admiration.

Nothing was more common, on either side, than to quit their proper characters, and to hope for a complete conquest by the use of the weapons which had been employed against them. Wit would sometimes labour a syllogism, and Learning distort her features with a jest; but they always suffered by the experiment, and betrayed themselves to confutation or contempt. The seriousness of Wit was without dignity, and the merriment of Learning without vivacity.

Their contests, by long continuance, grew at last important, and the divinities broke into parties. Wit was taken into protection of the laugher-loving Venus, had a retinue allowed him of Smiles and Jests, and was often permitted to dance among the Graces. Learning still coninued the favourite of Minerva, and seldom went out of her palace, without a train of the severer virtues, Chastity, Temperance, Fortitude, and Labour. Wit, cohabiting with Malice, had a son named Satyr, who followed him, carrying a quiver filled with poisoned arrows, which, where

they once drew blood, could by no skill ever be extracted. These arrows he frequently shot at Learning, when she was most earnestly or usefully employed, engaged in abstruse inquiries, or giving instructions to her followers. Minerva therefore deputed Criticism to her aid, who generally broke the point of Satyr's arrows, turned them aside, or retorted them on himself.

Jupiter was at last angry that the peace of the heavenly regions should be in perpetual danger of violation, and resolved to dismiss these troublesome antagonists to the lower world. Hither therefore they came, and carried on their ancient quarrel among mortals, nor was either long without zealous votaries. Wit, by his gaiety, captivated the young; and Learning, by her authority, influenced the old. Their power quickly appeared by very eminent effects: theatres were built for the reception of Wit; and colleges endowed for the residence of Learning. Each party endeavoured to outvie the other in cost and magnificence, and to propagate an opinion that it was necessary from the first entrance into life to enlist in one of the factions; and that none could hope for the regard of either divinity, who had once entered the temple of the rival power.

There were indeed a class of mortals, by whom Wit and Learning were equally disregarded these were the devotees of Plutus, the god o riches; among these it seldom happened that th gaiety of Wit could raise a smile, or the elo quence of Learning procure attention. In reveng of this contempt they agreed to incite their fol lowers against them; but the forces that wer

ent on those expeditions frequently betrayed their trust; and, in contempt of the orders which they had received, flattered the rich in public, while they scorned them in their hearts; and, when, by this treachery, they had obtained the favour of Plutus, affected to look with an air of superiority on those who still remained in the service of Wit and Learning.

Disgusted with these desertions, the two rivals, at the same time, petitioned Jupiter for readmission to their native habitations. Jupiter thundered on the right hand, and they prepared to obey the happy summons. Wit readily spread his wings and soared aloft, but not being able to see far, was bewildered in the pathless immensity of the ethereal spaces. Learning, who knew the way, shook her pinions; but for want of natural vigour could only take short flights: so, after many efforts, they both sunk again to the ground, and learned from their mutual distress the necessity of union. They therefore joined their hands and renewed their flight; Learning was borne up by the vigour of Wit, and Wit guided by the perspicacity of Learning. They soon reached the dwellings of Jupiter, and were so endeared to each other, that they lived afterwards in perpetual concord. Wit persuaded Learning to converse with the Graces, and Learning engaged Wit in the service of the Virtues. They were now the favourites of all the powers of heaven, and gladdened every banquet by their presence. They soon after married, at the command of Jupiter, and had a numerous progeny of Arts and Sciences.

RAMBLER.

RASHNESS PREFERABLE TO COWARDICE.

Possunt quia posse videntur.

VIRGIL.

For they can conquer who believe they can.

DRYDEN.

THERE are some vices and errors which, though often fatal to those in whom they are found, have yet, by the universal consent of mankind, been considered as entitled to some degree of respect, have, at least, been exempted from contemptuous infamy, and condemned by the severest moralists with pity rather than detestation.

A constant and invariable example of this general partiality will be found in the different regard which has always been shown to rashness and cowardice; two vices, of which, though they may be conceived equally distant from the middle point, where true fortitude is placed, and may equally injure any public or private interest, yet the one is never mentioned without some kind of veneration, and the other always considered as a topic of unlimited and licentious censure, on which all the virulence of reproach may be lawfully exerted.

The same distinction is made, by the common suffrage, between profusion and avarice, and perhaps, between many other opposite vices; and as

I have found reason to pay great regard to the voice of the people, in cases where knowledge has been forced upon them by experience, without long deductions, or deep researches, I am inclined to believe that this distribution of respect is not without some agreement with the nature of things; and that in the faults, which are thus invested with extraordinary privileges, there are generally some latent principles of merit, some possibilities of future virtue, which may, by degrees, break from obstruction, and by time and opportunity be brought into act.

It may be laid down as an axiom, that it is more easy to take away superfluities than to supply defects; and therefore he that is culpable, because he has passed the middle point of virtue, is always accounted a fairer object of hope than he who fails by falling short. The one has all that perfection requires, and more, but the excess may be easily retrenched; the other wants the qualities requisite to excellence, and who can tell how he shall obtain them? We are certain that the horse may be taught to keep pace with his fellows, whose fault is it that he leaves them behind? We know that a few strokes of the axe will lop a cedar; but what arts of cultivation can elevate a shrub?

To walk with circumspection and steadiness in the right path, at an equal distance between the extremes of error, ought to be the constant endeavour of every reasonable being; nor can I think those teachers of moral wisdom much to be honoured as benefactors to mankind, who are always enlarging upon the difficulty of our duties,

and providing rather excuses for vice, than incentives to virtue.

But, since to most it will happen often, and to all sometimes, that there will be a deviation towards one side or the other, we ought always to employ our vigilance, with most attention, on that enemy from which there is the greatest danger, and to stray, if we must stray, towards those parts from whence we may quickly and easily return.

Among other opposite qualities of the mind, which may become dangerous, though in different degees, I have often had occasion to consider the contrary effects of presumption and despondency; of heady confidence, which promises victory without contest, and heartless pusillanimity, which shrinks back from the thought of great undertakings, confounds difficulty with impossibility, and considers all advancement towards any new attainment as irreversibly prohibited.

Presumption will be easily corrected. Every experiment will teach caution, and miscarriages will hourly show, that attempts are not always rewarded with success. The most precipitate ardour will, in time, be taught the necessity of methodical gradation and preparatory measures; and the most daring confidence be convinced that neither merit nor abilities can command events.

It is the advantage of vehemence and activity, that they are always hastening to their own reformation; because they incite us to try whether our expectations are well grounded, and therefore detect the deceits which they are apt to occasion. But timidity is a disease of the mind more ob-

stinate and fatal; for a man once persuaded that any impediment is insuperable, has given it, with respect to himself, that strength and weight which it had not before. He can scarcely strive with vigour and perseverance, when he has no hope of gaining the victory: and since he never will try his strength, can never discover the unreasonableness of his fears.

There is often to be found in men devoted to literature a kind of intellectual cowardice, which whoever converses much among them, may observe frequently to depress the alacrity of enterprise, and by consequence, to retard the improvement of science. They have annexed to every species of knowledge some chimerical character of terror and inhibition, which they transmit, without much reflection, from one to another; they first fright themselves, and then propagate the panic to their scholars, and acquaintance. One study is inconsistent with a lively imagination, another with a solid judgment; one is improper in the early parts of life, another requires so much time, that it is not to be attempted at an advanced age; one is dry and contracts the sentiments, another is diffuse and overburdens the memory; one is insufferable to taste and delicacy, and another wears out life in the study of words, and is useless to a wise man, who desires only the knowledge of things.

But of all the bugbears by which the *infantes barbati*, boys both young and old, have been hitherto frighted from digressing into new tracts of learning, none has been more mischievously efficacious than an opinion that every kind of

knowledge requires a peculiar genius, or mental constitution framed for the reception of some ideas, and the exclusion of other: and that to him whose genius is not adapted to the study which he prosecutes, all labour shall be vain and fruitless, vain as an endeavour to mingle oil and water, or in the language of chemistry, to amalgamate bodies of heterogeneous principles.

This opinion we may reasonably suspect to have been propagated, by vanity, beyond the truth. It is natural for those who have raised a reputation by any science, to exalt themselves as endowed by Heaven with peculiar powers, or marked out by an extraordinary designation for their profession; and to fright competitors away by representing the difficulties with which they must contend, and the necessity of qualities which are supposed to be not generally conferred, and which no man can know but by experience whether he enjoys.

To this discouragement it may be possibly answered, that since a genius, whatever it be, is like fire in a flint, only to be produced by collision with a proper subject, it is the business of every man to try whether his faculties may not happily co-operate with his desires; and since they whose proficiency he admires, know their own force only by the event, he needs but engage in the same undertaking with equal spirit, and may reasonably hope for equal success.

There is another species of false intelligence, given by those who profess to show the way to the summit of knowledge, of equal tendency to depress the mind with false distrust of itself, and

weaken it by needless solicitude and dejection. When a scholar whom they desire to animate consults them at his entrance on some new study, it is common to make flattering representations of its pleasantness and facility. Thus they generally attain one of two ends almost equally desirable; they either incite his industry by elevating his hopes, or produce a high opinion of their own abilities, since they are supposed to relate only what they have found, and to have proceeded with no less ease than they promise to their followers.

The student, inflamed by this encouragement sets forward in the new path, and proceeds a few steps with great alacrity, but he soon finds asperities and intricacies of which he has not been forewarned, and imagining that none ever were so entangled or fatigued before him, sinks suddenly into despair, and desists as from an expedition in which fate opposes him. Thus his terrors are multiplied by his hopes, and he is defeated without resistance, because he had no expectation of an enemy.

Of these treacherous instructors, the one destroys industry, by declaring that industry is vain, the other by representing it as needless; the one cuts away the root of hope, the other raises it only to be blasted; the one confines his pupil to the shore, by telling him that his wreck is certain, the other sends him to sea, without preparing him for tempests.

False hopes and false terrors are equally to be avoided. Every man, who proposes to grow eminent by learning, should carry in his mind,

at once the difficulty of excellence and the force of industry; and remember, that fame is not conferred but at the recompense of labour, and that labour vigorously continued has not often failed of its reward.

RAMBLER.

THE FOLLY OF ANTICIPATING MISFORTUNES.

Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginosa nocte premit Deus
Ridetque, si mortales ultra
Fas trepidet—— HOR.

But God has wisely hid from human sight
The dark decrees of future fate,
And sown them deeds in depth of night,
He laughs at all the giddy turns of state,
When mortals search too soon, and fear too late.

DRYDEN.

THERE is nothing recommended with greater frequency among the gayer poets of antiquity, than the secure possession of the present hour, and the dismission of all the cares which intrude upon our quiet, or hinder, by importunate perturbations, the enjoyment of those delights which our condition happens to set before us.

The ancient poets are, indeed, by no means unexceptionable teachers of morality; their precepts are to be always considered as the sallies of a genius, intent rather upon giving pleasure than instruction, eager to take every advantage

of insinuation, and provided the passions can be engaged on its side, very solicitous about the suffrage of reason.

The darkness and uncertainty through which the heathens were compelled to wander in their pursuit of happiness, may, indeed, be alleged as an excuse for many of their seducing invitations to immediate enjoyment, which the moderns, by whom they have been imitated, have not to plead. It is no wonder that such as had no promise of another state should eagerly turn their thoughts upon the improvement of that which was before them; but surely those who are acquainted with the hopes and fears of eternity, might think it necessary to put some restraint upon their imagination, and reflect that by echoing the songs of the ancient bacchanals, and transmitting the maxims of past debauchery, they not only prove that they want invention, but virtue, and submit to the servility of imitation only to copy that of which the writer, if he was to live now, would often be ashamed.

Yet as the errors and follies of a great genius are seldom without some radiations of understanding, by which meaner minds may be enlightened, the incitements to pleasure are, in those authors, generally mingled with such reflections upon life, as well deserve to be considered distinctly from the purposes for which they are produced, and to be treasured up as the settled conclusions of extensive observation, acute sagacity, and mature experience.

It is not without true judgment, that on these occasions they often warn their readers against

inquiries into futurity, and solicitude about events which lie hid in causes yet inactive, and which time has not brought forward into the view of reason. An idle and thoughtless resignation to chance, without any struggle against calamity, or endeavour after advantage, is indeed below the dignity of a reasonable being, in whose power Providence has put a great part even of his present happiness; but it shows an equal ignorance of our proper sphere, to harass our thoughts with conjectures about things not yet in being. How can we regulate events, of which we yet know not whether they will ever happen? And why should we think, with painful anxiety, about that which on our thoughts can have no influence.

It is a maxim commonly received, that a wise man is never surprised; and, perhaps, this exemption from astonishment may be imagined to proceed from such a prospect into futurity, as gave previous intimation of those evils which often fall unexpected upon others that have less foresight. But the truth is, that things to come, except when they approach very nearly, are equally hidden from men of all degrees of understanding; and if a wise man is not amazed at sudden occurrences, it is not that he has thought more, but less upon futurity. He never considered things not yet existing as the proper objects of his attention; he never indulged dreams till he was deceived by their phantoms, nor ever realized nonentities to his mind. He is not surprised, because he is not disappointed, and he escapes disappointment because he never forms any expectations.

The concern about things to come, that is so justly censured, is not the result of those general reflections on the variableness of fortune, the uncertainty of life, and the universal insecurity of all human acquisitions, which must always be suggested by the view of the world: but such a desponding anticipation of misfortune, as fixes the mind upon scenes of gloom and melancholy, and makes fear predominate in every imagination.

Anxiety of this kind is nearly of the same nature with jealousy in love, and suspicion in the general commerce of life: a temper which keeps the man always in alarms; disposes him to judge of every thing in a manner that least favours his own quiet, fills him with perpetual stratagems of counteraction, wears him out in schemes to obviate evils which never threatened him, and at length, perhaps, contributes to the production of those mischiefs, of which it had raised such dreadful apprehensions.

It has been useful in all ages for moralists to repress the swellings of vain hope, by representations of the innumerable casualties to which life is subject, and by instances of the unexpected defeat of the wisest schemes of policy, and sudden subversions of the highest eminences of greatness. It has, perhaps, not been equally observed, that all these examples afford the proper antidote to fear, as well as to hope, may be applied with no less efficacy as consolations to the timorous, than as restraints to the proud.

Evil is uncertain in the same degree as good, and for the reason that we ought not to hope too

securely, we ought not to fear with too much dejection. The state of the world is continually changing, and none can tell the result of the next vicissitude. Whatever is afloat in the stream of time, may, when it is very near us, be driven away by an accidental blast, which shall happen to cross the general course of the current. The sudden accidents by which the powerful are depressed, may fall upon those whose malice we fear; and the greatness by which we expect to be overborne, may become another proof of the false flatteries of fortune. Our enemies may become weak, or we grow strong before our encounter, or we may advance against each other without ever meeting. There are, indeed, natural evils which we can flatter ourselves with no hopes of escaping, and with little of delaying; but of the ills which are apprehended from human malignity, or the opposition of rival interests, we may always alleviate the terror by considering that our persecutors are weak and ignorant, and mortal like ourselves.

The misfortunes which arise from the concurrence of unhappy incidents should never be suffered to disturb us before they happen; because, if the breast be once laid open to the dread of mere possibilities of misery, life must be given a prey to dismal solicitude, and quiet must be lost for ever.

It is remarked by old Cornaro, that it is absurd to be afraid of the natural dissolution of the body, because it must certainly happen, and can, by no caution or artifice, be avoided. Whether

he sentiment be entirely just I shall not examine; *but certainly if it be improper to fear events which must happen, it is yet more evidently contrary to right reason to fear those which may never happen, and which, if they should come upon us, we cannot resist.*

As we ought not to give way to fear, any more than indulgence to hope, because the objects of fear and hope are yet uncertain; so we ought not to trust the representations of one more than of the other, because they are both equally fallacious; as hope enlarges happiness, fear aggravates calamity. It is generally allowed, that no man ever found the happiness of possession proportionate to that expectation which incited his desire, and invigorated his pursuit; nor has any man found the evils of life so formidable in reality, as they were described to him by his own imagination; every species of distress brings with it some peculiar supports, some unforeseen means of resisting, or power of enduring. Taylor justly blames some pious persons, who indulge their fancies too much, set themselves, by the force of imagination, in the place of the ancient martyrs and confessors, and question the validity of their own faith, because they shrink at the thoughts of flames and tortures. It is, says he, sufficient that you are able to encounter the temptations which now assault you; when God sends trials, he may send strength.

All fear is in itself painful, and when it conduces not to safety, is painful without use. Every consideration, therefore, by which groundless terrors may be removed, adds something to

human happiness. It is likewise not unworthy of remark, that in proportion as our cares are employed upon the future, they are abstracted from the present, from the only time which we can call our own, and of which if we neglect the apparent duties to make provision against visionary attacks, we shall certainly counteract our own purpose; for he, doubtless, mistakes his true interest, who thinks that he can increase his safety when he impairs his virtue.

RAMBLER.

THE OBSERVANCE OF SUNDAY RECOMMENDED.

——— *Vultus ubi tuus*
Affulsit populo, gratior it dies,
Et soles melius nitent. HOR.

Whene'er thy countenance divine
Th' attendant people cheers,
The genial sun more radiant shine
The day more glad appears. ELPHINSTON.

MR. RAMBLER,

THERE are few tasks more ungrateful than for persons of modesty to speak their own praises. In some cases, however, this must be done for the general good, and a generous spirit will on such occasions assert its merit, and vindicate itself with becoming warmth.

My circumstances, Sir, are very hard and peculiar. Could the world be brought to treat me as I deserve, it would be a public benefit.

This makes me apply to you, that my case being fairly stated in a paper so generally esteemed, I may suffer no longer from ignorant and childish prejudices.

My elder brother was a Jew; a very respectable person, but somewhat austere in his manner; highly and deservedly valued by his near relations and intimates, but utterly unfit for mixing in a larger society, or gaining a general acquaintance among mankind. In a venerable old age he retired from the world, and I, in the bloom of youth, came into it, succeeding him in all his dignities, and formed, as I might reasonably flatter myself, to be the object of universal love and esteem. Joy and gladness were born with me; cheerfulness, good-humour, and benevolence, always attended and endeared my infancy. That time is long past; so long, that idle imaginations are apt to fancy me wrinkled, old, and disagreeable; but, unless my looking-glass deceives me, I have not yet lost one charm one beauty of my earliest years. However, thus far is too certain, I am to every body just what they choose to think me, so that to very few I appear in my right shape; and though naturally I am the friend of human kind, to few, very few comparatively, am I useful or agreeable.

This is the more grievous, as it is utterly impossible for me to avoid being in all sorts of places and companies; and I am therefore liable to meet with perpetual affronts and injuries. Though I have as natural an antipathy to cards and dice as some people have to a cat, many and many an assembly am I forced to endure; and

though rest and composure are my peculiar joy, am worn out and harassed to death with journies by men and women of quality, who never take one but when I can be of the party. Some, on a contrary extreme will never receive me but in bed, where they spend at least half of the time I have to stay with them; and others are so monstrously ill bred as to take physic on purpose when they have reason to expect me. Those who keep upon terms of more politeness with me are generally so cold and constrained in their behaviour, that I cannot but perceive myself an unwelcome guest; and even among persons deserving of esteem, and who certainly have a value for me, it is too evident that generally whenever I come I throw a dulness over the whole company, that I am entertained with a formal stiff civility, and that they are glad when I am fairly gone.

How bitter must this kind of reception be to one formed to inspire delight, admiration, and love! To one capable of answering and rewarding the greatest warmth and delicacy of sentiments!

I was bred up among a set of excellent people, who affectionately loved me, and treated me with the utmost honor and respect. It would be tedious to relate the variety of my adventures, and strange vicissitudes of my fortune in many different countries. Here in England there was a time when I lived according to my heart's desire. Wherever I appeared, public assemblies appointed for my reception were crowded, with quality and fashion, early dressed, as

for a court, to pay me their devoirs. Cheerful hospitality every where crowned my board, and I was looked upon in every country parish as a kind of social bond between the squire, the parson, and the tenants. The laborious poor every where blessed my appearance: they do so still, and keep their best clothes to do me honour; though as much as I delight in the honest country folks, they do now and then throw a pot ale at my head, and sometimes an unlucky boy will drive his cricket-ball full in my face.

Even in these my best days there were persons who thought me too demure and grave. I must forsooth by all means be instructed by foreign masters, and taught to dance and play. This method of education was so contrary to my genius, formed for much nobler entertainments, that it did not succeed at all.

I fell next into the hands of a very different set. They were so excessively scandalized at the gaiety of my appearance, as not only to despoil me of the foreign fopperies, and the patches that I had been tricked out with by my last misjudging tutors, but they robbed me of every innocent ornament I had from my infancy been used to gather in the fields and gardens; nay, they blacked my face, and covered me all over with a habit of mourning, and that too very coarse and awkward. I was now obliged to spend my whole life in hearing sermons; nor permitted so much as to smile upon any occasion.

In this melancholy disguise I became a perfect bugbear to all children and young folks. Wherever I came there was a general hush, and

not being permitted to talk with them in my own language at that time, they took such a disgust to me in those tedious hours of yawning, that, having transmitted it to their children, I cannot now be heard, though it is long since I have recovered my natural form and pleasing tone of voice. Would they but receive my visits kindly, and listen to what I could tell them—let me say it without vanity—how charming a companion should I be to every one, could I talk on the subjects most interesting and most pleasing. With the great and ambitious, I would chuse courses of honours and advancements, of distinctions to which the whole world should be witness, of unenvied dignities and durable preferments. To the rich I would tell of inexhaustible treasures, and the sure method to attain them. I would teach them to put out their money on the best interest, and instruct the lovers of pleasure how to secure and improve it to the highest degree. The beauty should learn of me how to preserve an everlasting bloom. To the afflicted I would administer comfort, and relaxation to the busy.

As I dare promise myself you will attest the truth of all I have advanced, there is no doubt but many will be desirous of improving their acquaintance with me; and that I may not be thought too difficult, I will tell you, in short, how I wish to be received.

You must know I equally hate lazy idleness and hurry. I would every where be welcomed at a tolerably early hour, with decent good-humour and gratitude. I must be attended in the great halls, peculiarly appropriated to me,

with respect; but I do not insist upon finery: propriety of appearance, and perfect neatness, is all I require. I must at dinner be treated with a temperate, but cheerful social mein; both the neighbours and the poor should be the better for me. Some time I must have *tête-à-tête* with my kind entertainers, and the rest of my visit should be spent in pleasant walks and airings among sets of agreeable people; in such discourse as I shall naturally dictate, or in reading some few selected out of those numberless books that are dedicated to me and go by my name. A name that, alas! as the world stands at present, makes them oftener thrown aside than taken up. As those conversations and books should be both well chosen, to give some advice on that head may possibly furnish you with a future paper, and any thing you shall offer on my behalf will be of great service to,

Good Mr. Rambler,

Your faithful friend and servant,

SUNDAY.

THE VANITY OF STOICISM.

Ὅσσά τε δαιμονίησι τύχαις βροτοὶ ἄλγε' ἔχουσιν,
Ὧν ἂν μοῖραν ἔχῃς, πρῴως φέρε, μηδ' ἀγανάκτει.
Ἰᾶσθαι δὲ ὠρέπει κάθοσον δύνῃ.

PYTHAG.

Of all the woes that o'er the mortal state,
Whate'er thy portion, mildly meet thy fate;
But ease it as thou canst.—— ELPHINSTON.

So large a part of human life passes in a state contrary to our natural desires, that one of the principal topics of moral instruction is the art of bearing calamities. And such is the certainty of evil, that it is the duty of every man to furnish his mind with those principles that may enable him to act under it with decency and propriety.

The sect of ancient philosophers, that boasted to have carried this necessary science to the highest perfection, were the stoics, or scholars of Zeno, whose wild enthusiastic virtue pretended to an exemption from the sensibilities of unenlightened mortals, and who proclaimed themselves exalted, by the doctrines of their sect, above the reach of those miseries which embitter life to the rest of the world. They therefore removed pain, poverty, loss of friends, exile, and violent death, from the catalogue of evils; and passed, in their haughty style, a kind of irreversible decree, by which they forbade them to be counted any longer among the objects of terror or anxiety, or to give any disturbance to the tranquillity of a wise man.

This edict was, I think, not universally observed: for though one of the more resolute, when he was tortured by a violent disease, cried out, that let pain harass him to its utmost power, it should never force him to consider it as other than indifferent and neutral; yet all had not stubbornness to hold out against their senses; for a weaker pupil of Zeno is recorded to have confessed in the anguish of the gout, that *he now found pain to be an evil.*

It may however be questioned, whether these philosophers can be very properly numbered among the teachers of patience; for if pain be not an evil, there seems no instruction requisite how it may be borne: and, therefore, when they endeavour to arm their followers with arguments against it, they may be thought to have given up their first position. But such inconsistencies are to be expected from the greatest understandings, when they endeavour to grow eminent by singularity, and employ their strength in establishing opinions opposite to nature.

The controversy about the reality of external evils is now at an end. That life has many miseries, and that those miseries are, sometimes at least, equal to all the powers of fortitude, is now universally confessed; and therefore it is useful to consider not only how we may escape them, but by what means those which either the accidents of affairs, or the infirmities of nature, must bring upon us, may be mitigated and lightened, and how we may make those hours less wretched, which the condition of our present existence will not allow to be very happy.

The cure for the greatest part of human miseries is not radical, but palliative. Infelicity is involved in corporeal nature, and interwoven with our being; all attempts therefore to decline it wholly are useless and vain; the armies of pain send their arrows against us on every side, the choice is only between those which are more or less sharp, or tinged with poison of greater or less malignity; and the strongest armour which reason can supply, will only blunt their points, but cannot repel them.

The great remedy which Heaven has put in our hands is patience, by which, though we cannot lessen the torments of the body, we can in a great measure preserve the peace of the mind, and shall suffer only the natural and genuine force of an evil, without heightening its acrimony, or prolonging its effects.

There is indeed nothing more unsuitable to the nature of man in any calamity than rage and turbulence, which, without examining whether they are not sometimes impious, are at least always offensive, and incline others rather to hate and despise than to pity and assist us. If what we suffer has been brought upon us by ourselves, it is observed by an ancient poet, that patience is eminently our duty, since no one should be angry at feeling that which he has deserved.

Leniter ex merito quicquid patiare ferendum est.

Pain deserv'd without complaint be borne.

And surely, if we are conscious that we have not contributed to our own sufferings, if punishment

falls upon innocence, or disappointment happens to industry and prudence, patience, whether more necessary or not, is much easier, since our pain is then without aggravation, and we have not the bitterness of remorse to add to the asperity of misfortune.

In those evils which are allotted to us by Providence, such as deformity, privation of any of the senses, or old age, it is always to be remembered, that impatience can have no present effect, but to deprive us of the consolations which our condition admits, by driving away from us those by whose conversation or advice we might be amused or helped: and that with regard to futurity it is yet less to be justified, since, without lessening the pain, it cuts off the hope of that reward which He, by whom it is inflicted, will confer upon them that bear it well.

In all evils which admit a remedy, impatience is to be avoided, because it wastes that time and attention in complaints, that, if properly applied, might remove the cause. Turenne, among the acknowledgments which he used to pay in conversation to the memory of those by whom he had been instructed in the art of war, mentioned one with honour, who taught him not to spend his time in regretting any mistake which he had made, but to set himself immediately and vigorously to repair it.

Patience and submission are very carefully to be distinguished from cowardice and indolence. We are not to repine, but we may lawfully struggle; for the calamities of life, like the necessities of nature, are calls to labour and exercises of

diligence. When we feel any pressure of distress, we are not to conclude that we can only obey the will of Heaven by languishing under it, any more than when we perceive the pain of thirst, we are to imagine that water is prohibited. Of misfortune it never can be certainly known whether, as proceeding from the hand of God, it is an act of favour or of punishment: but since all the ordinary dispensations of Providence are to be interpreted according to the general analogy of things, we may conclude that we have a right to remove one inconvenience as well as another; that we are only to take care lest we purchase ease with guilt; and that our Maker's purpose, whether of reward or severity, will be answered by the labours which he lays us under the necessity of performing.

This duty is not more difficult in any state than in diseases intensely painful, which may indeed suffer such exacerbations as seem to strain the powers of life to their utmost stretch, and leave very little of the attention vacant to precept or reproof. In this state the nature of man requires some indulgence, and every extravagance but impiety may be easily forgiven him. Yet lest we should think ourselves too soon entitled to the mournful privileges of irresistible misery, it is proper to reflect, that the utmost anguish which human wit can contrive, or human malice can inflict, has been borne with constancy; and that if the pains of disease be, as I believe they are, sometimes greater than those of artificial torture, they are therefore in their own nature shorter: the vital frame is quickly broken, or the union

between soul and body, is for a time suspended by insensibility, and we soon cease to feel our maladies when they once become too violent to be borne. I think there is some reason for questioning whether the body and mind are not so proportioned, that the one can bear all that can be inflicted on the other, whether virtue cannot stand its ground as long as life, and whether a soul well principled will not be separated sooner than subdued.

In calamities which operate chiefly on our passions, such as diminution of fortune, loss of friends, or declension of character, the chief danger of impatience is upon the first attack, and many expedients have been contrived, by which the blow may be broken. Of these the most general precept is not to take pleasure in any thing, of which it is not in our power to secure the possession to ourselves. This counsel, when we consider the enjoyment of any terrestrial advantage, as opposite to a constant and habitual solicitude for future felicity, is undoubtedly just, and delivered by that authority which cannot be disputed; but, in any other sense, is it not like advice, not to walk lest we should stumble, or not to see, lest our eyes should light upon deformity? It seems to me reasonable to enjoy blessings with confidence, as well as to resign them with submission, and to hope for the continuance of good which we possess without insolence or voluptuousness, as for the restitution of that which we lose without despondency or murmurs.

The chief security against the fruitless anguish of impatience, must arise from frequent reflec-

tion on the wisdom and goodness of the God of nature, in whose hands are riches and poverty, honour and disgrace, pleasure and pain, and life and death. A settled conviction of the tendency of every thing to our good, and of the possibility of turning miseries into happiness, by receiving them rightly, will incline us to *bless the name of the Lord, whether he gives or takes away.*

RAMBLER.

AN ALLEGORICAL HISTORY OF REST AND LABOUR.

Quod caret alternâ requie durabile non est.

OVID.

Alternate rest and labour long endure.

IN the early ages of the world, as is well known to those who are versed in ancient traditions, when innocence was yet untainted, and simplicity unadulterated, mankind was happy in the enjoyment of continual pleasure, and constant plenty, under the protection of Rest; a gentle divinity, who required of her worshippers neither altars nor sacrifices, and whose rites were only performed by prostrations upon turfs of flowers, in shades of jasmine and myrtle, or by dances on the banks of rivers flowing with milk and nectar.

Under this easy government the first generations breathed the fragrance of perpetual spring, ate the fruits, which, without culture, fell ripe into their hands, and slept under bowers arched by

nature, with the birds singing over their heads, and the beasts sporting about them. But by degrees they began to lose their original integrity; each, though there was more than enough for all, was desirous of appropriating part to himself. Then entered violence and fraud, and theft and rapine. Soon after pride and envy broke into the world, and brought with them a new standard of wealth; for men, who till then thought themselves rich when they wanted nothing, now rated their demands, not by the calls of nature, but by the plenty of others; and began to consider themselves as poor, when they beheld their own possessions exceeded by those of their neighbours. Now only one could be happy, because only one could have most, and that one was always in danger, lest the same arts by which he had supplanted others should be practised upon himself.

Amidst the prevalence of this corruption, the state of the earth was changed; the year was divided into seasons: part of the ground became barren, and the rest yielded only berries, acorns, and herbs. The summer and autumn indeed furnished a coarse and inelegant sufficiency, but winter was without any relief; Famine, with a thousand diseases which the inclemency of the air invited into the upper regions, made havoc among men, and there appeared to be danger lest they should be destroyed before they were reformed.

To oppose the devastations of Famine, who scattered the ground every where with carcases, Labour came down upon earth. Labour was the

son of Necessity, the nurseling of Hope, and the pupil of Art; he had the strength of his mother, the spirit of his nurse, and the dexterity of his governess. His face was wrinkled with the wind, and swarthy with the sun: he had the implements of husbandry in one hand, with which he turned up the earth; in the other he had the tools of architecture, and raised walls and towers at his pleasure. He called out with a rough voice, "Mortals! see here the power to whom you are consigned, and from whom you are to hope for all your pleasures, and all your safety. You have long languished under the dominion of Rest, an impotent, and deceitful goddess, who can neither protect nor relieve you, but resigns you to the first attacks of either Famine or Disease, and suffers her shades to be invaded by every enemy, and destroyed by every accident.

"Awake therefore to the call of Labour. I will teach you to remedy the sterility of the earth, and the severity of the sky; I will compel summer to find provisions for the winter; I will force the waters to give you their fish, the air its fowls, and the forest its beasts; I will teach you to pierce the bowels of the earth, and bring out from the caverns of the mountains metals which shall give strength to your hands, and security to your bodies, by which you may be covered from the assaults of the fiercest beasts, and with which you shall fell the oak, and divide rocks, and subject all nature to your use and pleasure."

Encouraged by this magnificent invitation, the inhabitants of the globe considered Labour as their only friend, and hasted to his command.

He led them out to the fields and mountains, and showed them how to open mines, to level hills, to drain marshes, and change the course of rivers. The face of things was immediately transformed; the land was covered with towns and villages, encompassed with fields of corn, and plantations of fruit-trees: and nothing was seen but heaps of grain, and baskets of fruit, full tables, and crowded store-houses.

Thus Labour and his followers added every hour new acquisitions to their conquests, and saw Famine gradually dispossessed of his dominions; till at last, amidst their jollity and triumphs, they were depressed and amazed by the approach of Lassitude, who was known by her sunken eyes and dejected countenance. She came forward trembling and groaning; at every groan the hearts of all those that beheld her lost their courage, their nerves slackened, their hands shook, and the instruments of labour fell from their grasp.

Shocked with this horrid phantom, they reflected with regret on their easy compliance with the solicitation of Labour, and began to wish again for the golden hours which they remembered to have passed under the reign of Rest, whom they resolved again to visit, and to whom they intended to dedicate the remainder of their lives. Rest had not left the world; they quickly found her, and, to atone for their former desertion, invited her to the enjoyment of those acquisitions which Labour had procured them.

Rest, therefore, took leave of the groves and valleys, which she had hitherto inhabited, and

entered into palaces, reposed herself in alcoves, and slumbered away the winter upon beds of down, and the summer in artificial grottoes with cascades playing before her. There was indeed always something wanting to complete her felicity, and she could never lull her returning fugitives to that serenity which they knew before their engagements with Labour: nor was her dominion entirely without control, for she was obliged to share it with Luxury, though she always looked upon her as a false friend, by whom her influence was in reality destroyed, while it seemed to be promoted.

The two soft associates, however, reigned for some time without visible disagreement, till at last Luxury betrayed her charge, and let in Disease to seize upon her worshippers. Rest then flew away, and left the place to the usurpers: who employed all their arts to fortify themselves in their possession, and to strengthen the interest of each other.

Rest had not always the same enemy; in some places she escaped the incursions of Disease; but had her residence invaded by a more slow and subtle intruder, for very frequently, when every thing was composed and quiet, when there was neither pain within, nor danger without, when every flower was in bloom, and every gale freighted with perfumes, Satiety would enter, with a languishing and repining look, and throw herself upon the couch placed and adorned for the accommodation of Rest. No sooner was she seated, than a general gloom spread itself on every side, the groves immediately lost their verdure, and

their inhabitants desisted from their melody, the breeze sunk in sighs, and the flowers contracted their leaves, and shut up their odours. Nothing was seen on every side but multitudes wandering about they knew not whither, in quest they could not tell of what; no voice was heard but of complaints that mentioned no pain, and murmurs that could tell of no misfortune.

Rest had now lost her authority. Her followers again began to treat her with contempt; some of them united themselves more closely to Luxury, who promised by her arts to drive Satiety away; and others, that were more wise, or had more fortitude, went back again to Labour, by whom they were indeed protected from Satiety, but delivered up in time to Lassitude, and forced by her to the bowers of Rest.

Thus Rest and Labour equally perceived their reign of short duration and uncertain tenure, and their empire liable to inroads from those who were alike enemies to both. They each found their subjects unfaithful, and ready to desert them upon every opportunity. Labour saw the riches which he had given always carried away as an offering to Rest, and Rest found her votaries in every exigence flying from her to beg help of Labour. They, therefore, at last determined upon an interview, in which they agreed to divide the world between them, and govern it alternately, allotting the dominion of the day to one, and that of the night to the other, and promised to guard the frontiers of each other, so that, whenever hostilities were attempted, Satiety should be intercepted by Labour,

and Lassitude expelled by Rest. Thus the ancient quarrel was appeased, and as hatred is often succeeded by its contrary, Rest afterwards became pregnant by Labour, and was delivered of Health, a benevolent goddess, who consolidated the union of her parents, and contributed to the regular vicissitudes of their reign, by dispensing her gifts to those only who shared their lives in just proportions between Rest and Labour.

RAMBLER.

THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF PASTORAL POETRY.

Canto quæ solitus, si quando armenta vocabat,
Amphion, Dircæus. VIRG.

Such strains I sing as once Amphion play'd
When list'ning flocks the powerful call obey'd.

ELPHINSTON.

IN writing or judging of pastoral poetry, neither the authors nor critics of latter times seem to have paid sufficient regard to the originals left us by antiquity, but have entangled themselves with unnecessary difficulties, by advancing principles, which, having no foundation in the nature of things, are wholly to be rejected from a species of composition, in which, above all others, mere nature is to be regarded.

It is therefore necessary to inquire after some more distinct and exact idea of this kind of

writing. This may, I think, be easily found in the pastorals of Virgil, from whose opinion it will not appear very safe to depart, if we consider that every advantage of nature and of fortune concurred to complete his productions; that he was born with great accuracy and severity of judgment, enlightened with all the learning of one of the brightest ages, and embellished with the elegance of the Roman court; that he employed his powers rather in improving than inventing, and therefore must have endeavoured to recompense the want of novelty by exactness: that, taking Theocritus for his original, he found pastoral far advanced towards perfection, and that, having so great a rival, he must have proceeded with uncommon caution.

If we search the writings of Virgil, for the true definition of a pastoral, it will be found *a poem in which any action or passion is represented by its effects upon a country life.* Whatsoever therefore may, according to the common course of things, happen in the country, may afford a subject for a pastoral poet.

In this definition, it will immediately occur to those who are versed in the writings of the modern critics, that there is no mention of the golden age. I cannot indeed easily discover why it is thought necessary to refer descriptions of a rural state to remote times, nor can I perceive that any writer has consistently preserved the Arcadian manners and sentiments. The only reason, that I have read, on which this rule has been founded, is, that according to the custom of modern life, it is improbable that shep-

herds should be capable of harmonious numbers, or delicate sentiments; and therefore the reader must exalt his ideas of the pastoral character, by carrying his thoughts back to the age in which the care of herds and flocks was the employment of the wisest and greatest men.

These reasoners seem to have been led into their hypothesis, by considering pastoral, not in general, as a representation of rural nature, and consequently as exhibiting the ideas and sentiments of those, whoever they are, to whom the country affords pleasure or employment, but simply as a dialogue, or narrative of men actually tending sheep, and busied in the lowest and and most laborious offices; whence they very readily concluded, since characters must necessarily be preserved, that either the sentiments must sink to the level of the speakers, or the speakers must be raised to the height of the sentiments.

In consequence of these original errors, a thousand precepts have been given, which have only contributed to perplex and confound. Some have thought it necessary that the imaginary manners of the golden age should be universally preserved, and have therefore believed, that nothing more could be admitted in pastoral than lilies and roses, and rocks and streams, among which are heard the gentle whispers of chaste fondness, or the soft complaints of amorous impatience. In pastoral, as in other writings, chastity of sentiment ought doubtless to be observed, and purity of manners to be represented; not because the poet is confined to the images of

the golden age, but because, having the subject in his own choice, he ought always to consult the interest of virtue.

These advocates for the golden age lay down other principles, not very consistent with their general plan; for they tell us that, to support the character of the shepherd, it is proper that all refinement should be avoided, and that some slight instances of ignorance should be interspersed. Thus the shepherd in Virgil is supposed to have forgotten the name of Anaximander, and in Pope the term Zodiac is too hard for a rustic's apprehension. But if we place our shepherds in their primitive condition, we may give them learning among their other qualifications; and if we suffer them to allude at all to things of later existence, which perhaps, cannot with any great propriety be allowed, there can be no danger of making them speak with too much accuracy, since they conversed with divinities, and transmitted to succeeding ages the arts of life.

Other writers, having the mean and despicable condition of a shepherd always before them, conceive it necessary to degrade the language of pastoral by obsolete terms and rustic words, which they very learnedly call Doric, without reflecting that they thus became authors of a mangled dialect, which no human being ever could have spoken, that they may as well refine the speech as the sentiments of their personages, and that none of the inconsistencies which they endeavour to avoid, is greater than that of joining elegance of thought with coarseness of diction. Spenser begins one of his pastorals with studied barbarity;

Diggon Davie, I bid her good day:
Or, Diggon her is, or I missay.

Dig. Her was her while it was day-light,
But now her is a most wretched wight.

What will the reader imagine to be the subject on which speakers like these exercise their eloquence? Will he not be somewhat disappointed, when he finds them met together to condemn the corruptions of the church of Rome? Surely, at the same time that a shepherd learns theology, he may gain some acquaintance with his native language.

Pastoral admits of all ranks of persons, because persons of all ranks inhabit the country. It excludes not, therefore, on account of the characters necessary to be introduced, any elevation or delicacy of sentiment; those ideas only are improper, which, not owing their original to rural objects, are not pastoral. Such is the exclamation in Virgil,

Nunc scio quid sit Amor, duris in cautibus illum
Ismarus, aut Rhodope, aut extremi Garamantes,
Nec generis nostri puerum, nec sanguinis, edunt.

I know thee, Love, in deserts thou wert bred,
And at the dugs of savage tigers fed;
Alien of birth, usurper of the plains.—DRYDEN.

Which Pope endeavouring to copy was carried to still greater impropriety:

I know thee, Love, wild as the raging main,
More fierce than tigers on the Libyan plain;
Thou wert from Etna's burning entrails torn;
Begot in tempests, and in thunders born!

Sentiments like these, as they have no ground in nature, are indeed of little value in any poem; but in pastoral they are particularly liable to censure, because it wants that exaltation above common life, which in tragic or heroic writings often reconciles us to bold flights and daring figures.

Pastoral being the *representation of an action or passion, by its effects upon a country life*, has nothing peculiar but its confinement to rural imagery, without which it ceases to be pastoral. This is its true characteristic, and this it cannot lose by any dignity of sentiment, or beauty of diction. The Pollio of Virgil, with all its elevation, is a composition truly bucolic, though rejected by the critics; for all the images are either taken from the country, or from the religion of the age common to all parts of the empire.

The Silenus is indeed of a more disputable kind, because though the scene lies in the country, the song, being religious and historical, had been no less adapted to any other audience or place. Neither can it well be defended as a fiction; for the introduction of a god seems to imply the golden age, and yet he alludes to many subsequent transactions, and mentions Gallus, the poet's contemporary.

It seems necessary to the perfection of this poem that the occasion which is supposed to produce it be at least not inconsistent with a country life, or less likely to interest those who have retired into places of solitude and quiet, than the more busy part of mankind. It is therefore

improper to give the title of a pastoral to verses in which the speakers, after the slight mention of their flocks, fall to complaints of errors in the church, and corruptions in the government, or to lamentations of the death of some illustrious person, whom, when once the poet has called a shepherd, he has no longer any labour upon his hands, but can make the clouds weep, and lilies wither, and the sheep hang their heads, without art or learning, genius or study.

It is part of Claudian's character of his rustic, that he computes his time, not by the succession of consuls, but of harvests. Those who pass their days in retreats distant from the theatres of business, are always least likely to hurry their imagination with public affairs.

The facility of treating actions or events in the pastoral style, has incited many writers, from whom more judgment might have been expected, to put the sorrow or the joy which the occasion required into the mouth of Daphne or of Thyrsis; and as one absurdity must naturally be expected to make way for another, they have written with an utter disregard both of life and nature, and filled their productions with mythological allusions, with incredible fictions, and with sentiments which neither passion nor reason could have dictated, since the change which religion has made in the whole system of the would.

RAMBLER.

THE ADVANTAGES OF MEMORY

Nulla recordanti lux estingrate gravisque,
Nulla fuit cujus non meminisse velit.
Ampliat ætatis spatium sibi vir bonus, hoc est
Vivere bis, vita posse priore frui.

No day's remembrance shall the good regret,
Nor wish one bitter moment to forget;
They stretch the limits of this narrow span,
And, by enjoying, live past life again. F. Lewis.

So few of the hours of life are filled up with objects adequate to the mind of man, and so frequently are we in want of present pleasure or employment, that we are forced to have recourse every moment to the past and future for supplemental satisfactions, and relieve the vacuities of our being, by recollection of former passages, or anticipation of events to come.

I cannot but consider this necessity of searching on every side for matter on which the attention may be employed, as a strong proof of the superior and celestial nature of the soul of man.

We have no reason to believe that other creatures have higher faculties, or more extensive capacities than the preservation of themselves, or their species, requires; they seem always to be fully employed, or to be completely at ease without employment, to feel few intellectual miseries or pleasures, and to have no exuberance of understanding to lay out upon curiosity or caprice, but to have their minds exactly adapted to their

bodies, with few other ideas than such as corporal pain or pleasure impress upon them.

Of memory, which makes so large a part of the excellence of the human soul, and which has so much influence upon all its other powers, but a small portion has been allotted to the animal world. We do not find the grief with which the dams lament the loss of their young, proportionate to the tenderness with which they caress, the assiduity with which they feed, or the vehemence with which they defend them. Their regard for their offspring, when it is before their eyes, is not, in appearance, less than that of a human parent; but when it is taken away, it is very soon forgotten, and, after a short absence, if brought again, wholly disregarded.

That they have very little remembrance of any thing once out of the reach of their senses, and scarce any power of comparing the present with the past, and regulating their conclusions from experience, may be gathered from this, that their intellects are produced in their full perfection. The sparrow that was hatched last spring makes her first nest the ensuing season, of the same materials, and with the same art, as in any following year; and the hen conducts and shelters her first brood of chickens with all the prudence that she ever attains.

It has been asked by men who love to perplex any thing that is plain to common understandings, how reason differs from instinct; and Prior has with no great propriety made Solomon himself declare, that to distinguish them is *the fool's ignorance, and the pedant's pride.* To give an

accurate answer to a question, of which the terms are not completely understood, is impossible; we do not know in what either reason or instinct consist, and therefore cannot tell with exactness how they differ; but surely he that contemplates a ship and a bird's nest, will not be long without finding out, that the idea of the one was impressed at once, and continued through all the progressive descents of the species, without variation or improvement; and that the other is the result of experiments compared with experiments; has grown, by accumulated observation, from less to greater excellence, and exhibits the collective knowledge of different ages and various professions.

Memory is the purveyor of reason, the power which places those images before the mind upon which the judgment is to be exercised, and which treasures up the determinations that are once passed, as the rules of future action, or grounds of subsequent conclusions.

It is, indeed, the faculty of remembrance, which may be said to place us in the class of moral agents. If we were to act only in consequence of some immediate impulse, and receive no direction from internal motives of choice, we should be pushed forward by an invincible fatality, without power or reason for the most part to prefer one thing to another, because we could make no comparison but of objects which might both happen to be present.

We owe to memory not only the increase of our knowledge, and our progress in rational inquiries, but many other intellectual pleasures.

Indeed, almost all that we can be said to enjoy is past or future; the present is in perpetual motion, leaves us as soon as it arrives, ceases to be present before its presence is well perceived, and is only known to have existed by the effects which it leaves behind. The greatest part of our ideas arises, therefore, from the view before or behind us, and we are happy or miserable, according as we are affected by the survey of our life, or our prospect of future existence.

With regard to futurity, when events are at such a distance from us that we cannot take the whole concatenation into our view, we have generally power enough over our imagination to turn it upon pleasing scenes, and can promise ourselves riches, honours, and delights, without intermingling those vexations and anxieties with which all human enjoyments are polluted. If fear breaks in on one side, and alarms us with dangers and disappointments, we can call in hope on the other, to solace us with rewards, and escapes, and victories; so that we are seldom without means of palliating remote evils, and can generally sooth ourselves to tranquillity, whenever any troublesome presage happens to attack us.

It is, therefore, I believe, much more common for the solitary and thoughtful to amuse themselves with schemes of the future, than reviews of the past. For the future is pliant and ductile, and will be easily moulded by a strong fancy into any form. But the images which memory present are of a stubborn and untractable nature, the objects of remembrance have already

existed, and left their signature behind them impressed upon the mind, so as to defy all attempts of rasure or of change.

As the satisfactions, therefore, arising from memory are less arbitrary, they are more solid, and are, indeed, the only joys which we can call our own. Whatever we have once deposited, as Dryden expresses it, *in the sacred treasure of the past*, is out of the reach of accident, or violence, nor can be lost either by our own weakness, or another's malice:

> ———*Non tamen irritum*
> *Quodcunque retro est efficiet, neque*
> *Diffinget, infectumque reddet,*
> *Quod fugiens semel hora vexit.*
>
> Be fair or foul, or rain or shine,
> The joys I have possess'd, in spite of fate, are mine.
> Not Heav'n itself upon the past has pow'r,
> But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.
>
> DRYDEN.

There is certainly no greater happiness than to be able to look back on a life usefully and virtuously employed, to trace our own progress in existence, by such tokens as excite neither shame nor sorrow. Life, in which nothing has been done or suffered to distinguish one day from another, is, to him that has passed it, as if it had never been, except that he is conscious how ill he has husbanded the great deposit of his Creator. Life, made memorable by crimes, and diversified though its several periods by wickedness, is indeed easily reviewed, but reviewed only with horror and remorse.

The great consideration which ought to influence us in the use of the present moment, is to arise from the effect, which, as well or ill applied, it must have upon the time to come; for though its actual existence be inconceivably short, yet its effects are unlimited; and there is not the smallest point of time but may extend its consequences, either to our hurt or our advantage, through all eternity, and give us reason to remember it for ever, with anguish or exultation.

The time of life, in which memory seems particularly to claim predominance over the other faculties of the mind, is our declining age. It has been remarked by former writers, that old men are generally narrative, and fall easily into recitals of past transactions, and accounts of persons known to them in their youth. When we approach the verge of the grave it is more eminently true:

Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.

Life's span forbids thee to extend thy cares,
And stretch thy hopes beyond thy years.

CREECH.

We have no longer any possibility of great vicissitudes in our favour: the changes which are to happen in the world will come too late for our accommodation; and those who have no hope before them, and to whom their present state is painful and irksome, must of necessity turn their thoughts back to try what retrospect will afford. It ought, therefore, to be the care of those who wish to pass the last hours with

comfort, to lay up such a treasure of pleasing ideas, as shall support the expenses of that time, which is to depend wholly upon the fund already acquired.

——*Petite hinc, juvenesque senesque,*
Finem animo certum, miserisque viatica canis.

Seek here, ye young, the anchor of your mind;
Here, suff'ring age, a bless'd provision find.

ELPHINSTON.

In youth, however unhappy, we solace ourselves with the hope of better fortune, and however vicious, appease our consciences with intentions of repentance; but the time comes at last, in which life has no more to promise, in which happiness can be drawn only from recollection, and virtue will be all that we can recollect with pleasure.

RAMBLER.

THE PROPER MEANS OF REGULATING SORROW.

Quanquam his solatiis acquiescam, debilitor et frangor eadem illa humanitate quæ me, ut hoc ipsum permitterem, induxit. Non ideo tamen velim durior fieri: nec ignoro alios hujusmodi casus nihil amplius vocare quam damnum; eoque sibi magnos homines et sapientes videri. Qui an magni sapientesque sint, nescio: homines non sunt. Hominis est enim afflci dolore, sentire: resistere tamen, et solatia admittere; non solatiis non egere.—PLIN.

These proceedings have afforded me some comfort in my distress; notwithstanding which, I am still dispirited and unhinged by the same motives of humanity that induced me to grant such indulgences However, I by no means wish to become less susceptible of tenderness. I know this kind of misfortunes would be estimated by other persons only as common losses, and from such sensations they would conceive themselves great and wise men. I shall not determine either their greatness or their wisdom; but I am certain they have no humanity. It is the part of a man to be affected with grief, to feel sorrow, at the same time that he is to resist it, and to admit of comfort.—EARL OF ORRERY.

OF the passions with which the mind of man is agitated, it may be observed, that they naturally hasten towards their own extinction, by inciting and quickening the attainment of their objects. Thus fear urges our flight, and desire animates our progress: and if there are some which perhaps may be indulged till they outgrow the good appropriated to their satisfaction, as it is frequently observed of avarice and ambition, yet their immediate tendency is to some means of happiness really existing, and generally within the prospect. The miser always imagines that

there is a certain sum that will fill his heart to the brim; and every ambitious man, like King Pyrrhus, has an acquisition in his thoughts that is to terminate his labours, after which he shall pass the rest of his life in ease or gaiety, in repose or devotion.

Sorrow is perhaps the only affection of the breast that can be excepted from this general remark, and it therefore deserves the particular attention of those who have assumed the arduous province of preserving the balance of the mental constitution. The other passions are diseases indeed, but they necessarily direct us to their proper cure. A man at once feels the pain and knows the medicine, to which he is carried with greater haste as the evil which requires it is more excruciating, and cures himself by unerring instinct, as the wounded stags of Crete are related by Ælian to have recourse to vulnerary herbs. But for sorrow there is no remedy provided by nature; it is often occasioned by accidents irreparable, and dwells upon objects that have lost or changed their existence; it requires what it cannot hope, that the laws of the universe should be repealed; that the dead should return, or the past should be recalled.

Sorrow is not that regret for negligence or error which may animate us to future care or activity, or that repentance of crimes for which, however irrevocable, our Creator has promised to accept it as an atonement; the pain which arises from these causes has very salutary effects, and is every hour extenuating itself by the reparation of those miscarriages that produce it.

Sorrow is properly that state of the mind in which our desires are fixed upon the past, without looking forward to the future, an incessant wish that something were otherwise than it has been, a tormenting and harassing want of some enjoyment or possession which we have lost, and which no endeavours can possibly regain. Into such anguish many have sunk upon some sudden diminution of their fortune, an unexpected blast of their reputation, or the loss of children or of friends. They have suffered all sensibility of pleasure to be destroyed by a single blow, have given up for ever the hopes of substituting any other object in the room of that which they lament, resigned their lives to gloom and despondency, and worn themselves out in unavailing misery.

Yet so much is this passion the natural consequence of tenderness and endearment, that however painful and however useless, it is justly reproachful not to feel it on some occasions; and so widely and constantly has it always prevailed, that the laws of some nations, and the customs of others, have limited a time for the external appearances of grief caused by dissolution of close alliances, and the breach of domestic union.

It seems determined by the general suffrage of mankind, that sorrow is to a certain point laudable, as the offspring of love, or at least pardonable, as the effect of weakness; but that it ought not to be suffered to increase by indulgence, but must give way, after a stated time, to social duties, and the common avocations of life. It is at first unavoidable, and therefore must be allowed, whether with or without our choice;

it may afterwards be admitted as a decent and affectionate testimony of kindness and esteem; something will be extorted by nature, and something may be given to the world. But all beyond the bursts of passion, or the forms of solemnity, is not only useless, but culpable; for we have no right to sacrifice to the vain longings of affection, that time which Providence allows us for the task of our station.

Yet it too often happens that sorrow, thus lawfully entering, gains such a firm possession of the mind, that it is not afterward, to be ejected; the mournful ideas, first violently impressed and afterwards willingly received, so much engross the attention, as to predominate in every thought, to darken gaiety, and perplex ratiocination. An habitual sadness seizes upon the soul, and the faculties are chained to a single object, which can never be contemplated but with hopeless uneasiness.

From this state of dejection it is very difficult to rise to cheerfulness and alacrity; and therefore many, who have laid down rules of intellectual health, think preservatives easier than remedies, and teach us not to trust ourselves with favourite enjoyments, not to indulge the luxury of fondness, but to keep our minds always suspended in such indifference, that we may change the objects about us without emotion.

An exact compliance with this rule might, perhaps, contribute to tranquillity, but surely it would never produce happiness. He that regards none so much as to be afraid of losing them, must live for ever without the gentle pleasures

of sympathy and confidence; he must feel no melting fondness, no warmth of benevolence, nor any of those honest joys which nature annexes to the power of pleasing. And as no man can justly claim more tenderness than he pays, he must forfeit his share in that officious and watchful kindness which love only can dictate, and those lenient endearments by which love only can soften life. He may justly be overlooked and neglected by such as have more warmth in their heart; for who would be the friend of him, whom, with whatever assiduity he may be courted, and with whatever services obliged, his principles will not suffer to make equal returns, and who when you have exhausted all the instances of good-will, can only be prevailed on not to be an enemy?

An attempt to preserve life in a state of neutrality and indifference, is unreasonable and vain. If by excluding joy we could shut out grief, the scheme would deserve very serious attention; but since, however we may debar ourselves from happiness, misery will find its way at many inlets, and the assaults of pain will force our regard, though we may withhold it from the invitations of pleasure, we may surely endeavour to raise life above the middle point of apathy at one time, since it will necessarily sink below it at another.

But though it cannot be reasonable not to gain happiness for fear of losing it, yet it must be confessed, that in proportion to the pleasure of possession, will be for some time our sorrow for the loss: it is therefore the province of the moralist to enquire whether such pains may not quickly give way to mitigation. Some have

thought that the most certain way to clear the heart from its embarrassment is to drag it by force into scenes of merriment. Others imagine, that such a transition is too violent, and recommend rather to soothe it into tranquillity, by making it acquainted with miseries more dreadful and afflictive, and diverting to the calamities of others the regard which we are inclined to fix too closely upon our own misfortunes.

It may be doubted whether either of those remedies will be sufficiently powerful. The efficacy of mirth it is not always easy to try, and the indulgence of melancholy may be suspected to be one of those medicines, which will destroy, if it happens not to cure.

The safe and general antidote against sorrow is employment. It is commonly observed, that among soldiers and seamen, though there is much kindness, there is little grief; they see their friend fall without any of that lamentation which is indulged in security and idleness, because they have no leisure to spare from the care of themselves; and whoever shall keep his thoughts equally busy, will find himself equally unaffected with irretrievable losses.

Time is observed generally to wear out sorrow, and its effects might doubtless be accelarated by quickening the succession, and enlarging the variety of objects.

———*Si tempore longo*
Leniri poterit luctus, tu sperne morari,
Qui sapiet sibi tempus erit.—— GROTIUS.

'Tis long ere time can mitigate your grief;
To wisdom fly, she quickly brings relief, F. LEWIS.

Sorrow is a kind of rust of the soul, which every new idea contributes in its passage to scour away. It is the putrefaction of stagnant life, and is remedied by exercise and motion.

RAMBLER.

A DISQUISITION UPON THE VALUE OF FAME.

Non omnis moriar, multaque pars mei
Vitabit Libitinum, usque ego postera
Crescam laude recens. HOR.

Whole Horace shall not die; his songs shall save
The greatest portion from the greedy grave.
CREECH.

THE first motives of human actions are those appetites which Providence has given to man in common with the rest of the inhabitants of the earth. Immediately after our birth, thirst and hunger incline us to the breast, which we draw by instinct, like other young creatures, and when we are satisfied, we express our uneasiness by importunate and incessant cries, till we have obtained a place or posture proper for repose.

The next call that rouses us from a state of inactivity, is that of our passions; we quickly begin to be sensible of hope and fear, love and hatred, desire and aversion; these arising from the power of comparison and reflection, extend their range wider, as our reason strengthens, and

our knowledge enlarges. At first we have no thought of pain, but when we actually feel it; we afterwards begin to fear it, yet not before it approaches us very nearly; but by degrees we discover it at a greater distance, and find it lurking in remote consequences. Our terror in time improves into caution, and we learn to look round with vigilance and solicitude, to stop all the avenues at which misery can enter, and to perform or endure many things, in themselves toilsome and unpleasing, because we know by reason, or by experience, that our labour will be overbalanced by the reward, that it will either procure some positive good, or avert some evil greater than itself.

But as the soul advances to a fuller exercise of its powers, the animal appetites, and the passions immediately arising from them, are not sufficient to find it employment; the wants of nature are soon supplied, the fear of their return is easily precluded, and something more is necessary to relieve the long intervals of inactivity, and to give those faculties, which cannot lie wholly quiescent, some particular direction. For this reason, new desires and artificial passions are by degrees produced; and, from having wishes only in consequence of our wants, we begin to feel wants in consequence of our wishes; we persuade ourselves to set a value upon things which are of no use, but because we have agreed to value them; things which can neither satisfy hunger, nor mitigate pain, nor secure us from any real calamity, and which, therefore, we find of no esteem among those nations, whose artless and

barbarous manners keep them always anxious for the necessaries of life.

This is the original of avarice, vanity, ambition, and generally of all those desires which arise from the comparison of our condition with that of others. He that thinks himself poor because his neighbour is richer; he that, like Cæsar, would rather be the first man of a village, than the second in the capital of the world, has apparently kindled in himself desires which he never received from nature, and acts upon principles established only by the authority of custom.

Of those adscititious passions, some, as avarice and envy, are universally condemned: some, as friendship and curiosity, generally praised; but there are others about which the suffrages of the wise are divided, and of which it is doubted, whether they tend more to promote the happiness or increase the miseries of mankind.

Of this ambiguous and disputable kind is the love of fame, a desire of filling the minds of others with admiration, and of being celebrated by generations to come with praises which we shall not hear. This ardour has been considered by some, as nothing better than splendid madness, as a flame kindled by pride, and fanned by folly; for what, say they, can be more remote from wisdom, than to direct all our actions by the hope of that which is not to exist till we ourselves are in the grave? To pant after that which can never be possessed, and of which the value thus widely put upon it, arises from this particular condition, that, during life, it is not to be obtained? To gain the favour, and hear

the applauses of our cotemporaries, is indeed equally desirable with any other prerogative of superiority, because fame may be of use to smooth the paths of life, to terrify opposition, and fortify tranquillity; but to what end shall we be the darlings of mankind, when we can no longer receive any benefits from their favour? It is more reasonable to wish for reputation, while it may yet be enjoyed, as Anacreon calls upon his companions to give him for present use the wine and garlands which they purpose to bestow upon his tomb.

The advocates for the love of fame allege in its vindication, that it is a passion natural and universal; a flame lighted by Heaven, and always burning with greatest vigour in the most enlarged and elevated minds. That the desire of being praised by posterity implies a resolution to deserve their praises, and that the folly charged upon it, is only a noble and disinterested generosity, which is not felt, and therefore not understood, by those who have been always accustomed to refer every thing to themselves, and whose selfishness has contracted their understandings. That the soul of man, formed for eternal life, naturally springs forward beyond the limits of corporeal existence, and rejoices to consider herself as co-operating with future ages and as co-extended with endless duration. That the reproach urged with so much petulance, the reproach of labouring for what cannot be enjoyed, is founded on an opinion which may with great probability be doubted: for since we suppose the powers of the soul to be enlarged by its

separation, why should we conclude that its knowledge of sublunary transactions is contracted or extinguished.

Upon an attentive and impartial review of the argument, it will appear that the love of fame is to be regulated rather than extinguished; and that men should be taught not to be wholly careless about their memory, but to endeavour that they may be remembered chiefly for their virtues, since no other reputation will be able to transmit any pleasure beyond the grave.

It is evident that fame, considered merely as the immortality of a name, is not less likely to be the reward of bad actions than of good; he therefore has no certain principle for the regulation of his conduct, whose single aim is not to be forgotten. And history will inform us, that this blind and undistinguishing appetite of renown has always been uncertain in its effects, and directed by accident or opportunity, indifferently to the benefit or devastation of the world. When Themistocles complained that the trophies of Miltiades hindered him from sleep, he was animated by them to perform the same services in the same cause. But Cæsar, when he wept at the sight of Alexander's picture, having no honest opportunities of action, let his ambition break out to the ruin of his country.

If, therefore, the love of fame is so far indulged by the mind as to become independent and predominant, it is dangerous and irregular; but it may be usefully employed as an inferior and secondary motive, and will serve sometimes to revive our activity, when we begin to languish

and lose sight of that more certain, more valuable, and more durable reward, which ought always to be our first hope and our last. But it must be strongly impressed upon our minds that virtue is not to be pursued as one of the means to fame, but fame to be accepted as the only recompence which mortals can bestow on virtue; to be accepted with complacence, but not sought with eagerness. Simply to be remembered is no advantage; it is a privilege which satire as well as panegyric can confer, and is not more enjoyed by Titus or Constantine, than by Timocreon of Rhodes, of whom we only know from his epitaph, *that he had eaten many a meal, drank many a flaggon, and uttered many a reproach*—

Πολλὰ φαγὼν, καὶ πολλὰ πιὼν καὶ πολλὰ κακ' εἰπών·
Ἄνθρωπους, κεῖμαι Τιμοκρέων Ῥόδιος.

The true satisfaction which is to be drawn from the consciousness that we shall share the attention of future times, must arise from the hope, that with our name, our virtues will be propagated; and that those whom we cannot benefit in our lives, may receive instruction from our examples, and incitement from our renown.

RAMBLER.

A DEATH BED THE TRUE SCHOOL OF WISDOM.

Traditur dies die,
Novæque pergunt interire lunæ;
Tu secanda marmora
Locas sub ipsum funus, et sepulchri
Immemor struis domos.

HOR.

Day presses on the heels of day,
And moons increase to their decay:
But you, with thoughtless pride elate,
Unconscious of impending fate,
Command the pillar'd dome to rise,
When lo! thy tomb forgotten lies. FRANCIS.

SIR,

I HAVE lately been called, from a mingled life of business and amusement, to attend the last hours of an old friend; an office which has filled me, if not with melancholy, at least with serious reflections, and turned my thoughts towards the contemplation of those subjects which, though of the utmost importance, and of indubitable certainty, are generally secluded from our regard, by the jollity of health, the hurry of employment, and even by the calmer diversions of study and speculation; or, if they become accidental topics of conversation and argument, yet rarely sink deep into the heart, but give occasion only to some subtilties of reasoning, or elegancies of declamation, which are heard, applauded, and forgotten.

It is, indeed, not hard, to conceive how a man

accustomed to extend his views through a long concatenation of causes and effects, to trace things from their origin to their period, and compare means with ends, may discover the weakness of human schemes; detect the fallacies by which mortals are deluded: show the insufficiency of wealth, honours, and power, to real happiness; and please himself, and his auditors, with learned lectures on the vanity of life.

But though the speculatist may see and show the folly of terrestrial hopes, fears, and desires, every hour will give proofs that he never felt it. Trace him through the day or year, and you will find him acting upon principles which he, has in common with the illiterate and unenlightened, angry and pleased like the lowest of the vulgar, pursuing, with the same ardour, the same designs, grasping with all the eagerness of transport those riches which he knows he cannot keep, and swelling with the applause which he has gained by proving that applause is of no value.

The only conviction that rushes upon the soul and takes away from our appetites and passions the power of resistance, is to be found, where I have received it, at the bed of a dying friend. To enter this school of wisdom is not the peculiar privilege of geometricians; the most sublime and important precepts require no uncommon opportunities, nor laborious preparations; they are enforced without the aid of eloquence, and understood without skill in analytic science. Every tongue can utter them, and every understanding can conceive them. He that wishes in earnest to obtain just sentiments concerning his

condition, and would be intimately acquainted with the world, may find instructions on every side. He that desires to enter behind the scene, which every art has been employed to decorate, and every passion labours to illuminate, and wishes to see life stripped of those ornaments which make it glitter on the stage, and exposed in its natural meanness, impotence, and nakedness, may find all the delusion laid open in the chamber of disease: he will there find vanity divested of her robes, power deprived of her sceptre, and hypocrisy without her mask.

The friend whom I have lost was a man eminent for genius, and like others of the same class, sufficiently pleased with acceptance and applause. Being caressed by those who have preferments and riches in their disposal, he considered himself as in the direct road of advancement, and had caught the flame of ambition by approaches to its object. But in the midst of his hopes, his projects, and his gaieties, he was seized by a lingering disease, which, from its first stage he knew to be incurable. Here was an end of all his visions of greatness and happiness; from the first hour that his health declined, all his former pleasures grew tasteless. His friends expected to please him by those accounts of the growth of his reputation, which were formerly certain of being well received; but they soon found how little he was now affected by compliments, and how vainly they attempted, by flattery, to exhilarate the langour of weakness, and relieve the solicitude of approaching death. Whoever would know how much piety and

virtue surpass all external goods, might here have seen them weighed against each other, where all that gives motion to the active, and elevation to the eminent, all that sparkles in the eye of hope, and pants in the bosom of suspicion, at once became dust in the balance, without weight and without regard. Riches, authority, and praise, lose all their influence when they are considered as riches, which to-morrow shall be bestowed upon another; authority which shall this night expire for ever; and praise which, however merited, or however sincere, shall, after a few moments, be heard no more.

In those hours of seriousness and wisdom, nothing appeared to raise his spirits, or gladden his heart, but the recollection of acts of goodness; nor to excite his attention, but some opportunity for the exercise of the duties of religion. Every thing that terminated on this side of the grave was received with coldness and indifference, and regarded rather in consequence of the habit of valuing it, than from any opinion that it deserved value; it had little more prevalence over his mind than a bubble that was now broken, a dream from which he was awake. His whole powers were engrossed by the consideration of another state, and all conversation was tedious that had not some tendency to disengage him from human affairs, and open his prospects into futurity.

It is now past; we have closed his eyes, and heard him breathe the groan of expiration. At the sight of this last conflict, I felt a sensation never known to me before; a confusion of pas-

sions, an awful stillness of sorrow, a gloomy terror without a name. The thoughts that entered my soul were too strong to be diverted, and too piercing to be endured; but such violence cannot be lasting, the storm subsided in a short time, I wept, retired, and grew calm.

I have from that time frequently revolved in my mind the effects which the observation of death produces, in those who are not wholly without the power and use of reflection; for by the greater part it is wholly unregarded. Their friends and their enemies sink into the grave without raising any uncommon emotion, or reminding them that they are themselves on the edge of the precipice, and that they must soon plunge into the gulf of eternity.

It seems to me remarkable that death increases our veneration for the good, and extenuates our hatred of the bad. Those virtues which once we envied, as Horace observes, because they eclipsed our own, can now no longer obstruct our reputation, and we have therefore no interest to suppress their praise. That wickedness, which we feared for its malignity, is now become impotent, and the man whose name filled us with alarm, and rage, and indignation, can at last be considered only with pity or contempt.

When a friend is carried to his grave, we at once find excuses for every weakness, and palliations of every fault; we recollect a thousand endearments, which before glided off our minds without impression, a thousand favours unrepaid, a thousand duties unperformed, and wish, vainly wish, for his return, not so much that we may

receive, as that we may bestow, happiness, and recompense that kindness which before we never understood.

There is not, perhaps, to a mind well instructed, a more painful occurrence than the death of one whom we have injured without reparation. Our crime seems now irretrievable; it is indelibly recorded, and the stamp of fate is fixed upon it. We consider, with the most afflictive anguish, the pain which we have given, and now cannot alleviate, and the losses which we have caused, and now cannot repair.

Of the same kind are the emotions which the death of an emulator or competitor produces. Whoever had qualities to alarm our jealousy, had excellence to deserve our fondness; and to whatever ardour of opposition interest may inflame us, no man ever outlived an enemy, whom he did not then wish to have made a friend. Those who are versed in literary history know, that the elder Scaliger was the redoubted antagonist of Cardan and Erasmus; yet at the death of each of his great rivals he relented, and complained that they were snatched away from him before their reconciliation was completed--

Tu-ne etiam moreris? Ah! quid me linquis, Erasme,
Ante meus quam sit conciliatus amor?

Art thou too fallen? ere anger could subside
And love return, has great Erasmus died?

Such are the sentiments with which we finally review the effects of passion, but which we sometimes delay till we can no longer rectify our

errors. Let us therefore make haste to do what we shall certainly at last wish to have done; let us return the caresses of our friends, and endeavour, by mutual endearments, to heighten that tenderness which is the balm of life. Let us be quick to repent of injuries while repentance may not be a barren anguish, and let us open our eyes to every rival excellence, and pay early and willingly those honours which justice will compel us to pay at last.

Rambler.] ATHANATUS.

THE DESIRE OF WEALTH MODERATED BY PHILOSOPHY.

———*Interea*
Crescunt divitiæ, tamen
Curtæ nescio quid semper abest rei. HOR.

But, while in heaps his wicked wealth ascends,
He is not of his wish possess'd;
There's something wanting still to make him bless'd.
FRANCIS.

As the love of money has been, in all ages, one of the passions that have given great disturbance to the tranquillity of the world, there is no topic more copiously treated by the ancient moralists than the folly of devoting the heart to the accumulation of riches. They who are acquainted with these authors need not be told how riches excite pity, contempt, or reproach, whenever

they are mentioned; with what numbers of examples the danger of large possessions is illustrated; and how all the powers of reason and eloquence have been exhausted in endeavours to eradicate a desire, which seems to have entrenched itself too strongly in the mind to be driven out, and which, perhaps, had not lost its power, even over those who declaimed against it, but would have broken out in the poet or the sage, if it had been excited by opportunity, and invigorated by the approximation of its proper object.

Their arguments have been, indeed, so unsuccessful, that I know not whether it can be shown, that by all the wit and reason which this favourite cause has called forth, a single convert was ever made; that even one man has refused to be rich, when to be rich was in his power, from the conviction of the greater happiness of a narrow fortune; or disburthened himself of wealth when he had tried its inquietudes, merely to enjoy the peace and leisure and security of a mean and unenvied state.

It is true, indeed, that many have neglected opportunities of raising themselves to honours and to wealth, and rejected the kindest offers of fortune: but however their moderation may be boasted by themselves, or admired by such as only view them at a distance, it will be perhaps, seldom found that they value riches less, but that they dread labour or danger more than others; they are unable to rouse themselves to action, to strain in the race of competition, or to stand the shock of contest; but though

they, therefore, decline the toil of climbing, they nevertheless wish themselves aloft, and would willingly enjoy what they dare not seize.

Others have retired from high stations, and voluntarily condemned themselves to privacy and obscurity. But, even these will not afford many occasions of triumph to the philosopher; for they have commonly either quitted that only which they thought themselves unable to hold, and prevented disgrace by resignation; or they have been induced to try new measures by general inconstancy, which always dreams of happiness in novelty, or by a gloomy disposition, which is disgusted in the same degree with every state, and wishes every scene of life to change as soon as it is beheld. Such men found high and low stations equally unable to satisfy the wishes of a distempered mind, and were unable to shelter themselves in the closest retreat from disappointment, solicitude, and misery.

Yet though these admonitions have been thus neglected by those, who either enjoyed riches, or were able to procure them, it is not rashly to be determined that they are altogether without use; for since far the greatest part of mankind must be confined to conditions comparatively mean, and placed in situations from which they naturally look up with envy to the eminences before them, those writers cannot be thought ill employed that have administered remedies to discontent almost universal, by showing, that what we cannot reach may very well be forborne, that the inequality of distribution, at which we murmur, is for the most part less than it seems, and

that the greatness, which we admire at a distance, has much fewer advantages, and much less splendour, when we are suffered to approach it.

It is the business of moralists to detect the frauds of fortune, and to show, that she imposes upon the careless eye, by a quick succession of shadows, which will shrink to nothing in the gripe; that she disguises life in extrinsic ornaments, which serve only for show, and are laid aside in the hours of solitude, and of pleasure; and that when greatness aspires either to felicity or to wisdom, it shakes off those distinctions which dazzle the gazer, and awe the supplicant.

It may be remarked, that they whose condition has not afforded them the light of moral or religious instruction, and who collect all their ideas by their own eyes, and digest them by their own understandings, seem to consider those who are placed in ranks of remote superiority, as almost another and higher species of beings. As themselves have known little other misery than the consequences of want, they are with difficulty persuaded that where there is wealth there can be sorrow, or that those who glitter in dignity, and glide along in affluence, can be acquainted with pains and cares like those which lie heavy upon the rest of mankind.

This prejudice is, indeed, confined to the lowest meanness, and the darkest ignorance; but it is so confined only because others have been shown its folly, and its falsehood, because it has been opposed in its progress by history and philosophy, and hindered from spreading its infection by powerful preservatives.

The doctrine of the contempt of wealth, though it has not been able to extinguish avarice or ambition, or suppress that reluctance with which a man passes his days in a state of inferiority, must, at least, have made the lower conditions less grating and wearisome, and has consequently contributed to the general security of life, by hindering that fraud and violence, rapine and circumvention, which must have been produced by an unbounded eagerness of wealth, arising from an unshaken conviction that to be rich is to be happy.

Whoever finds himself incited, by some violent impulse of passion, to pursue riches as the chief end of being, must surely be so much alarmed by the successive admonitions of those whose experience and sagacity have recommended them as the guides of mankind, as to stop and consider whether he is about to engage in an undertaking that will reward his toil, and to examine, before he rushes to wealth, through right and wrong, what it will confer when he has acquired it; and this examination will seldom fail to repress his ardour, and retard his violence.

Wealth is nothing in itself, it is not useful but when it departs from us; its value is found only in that which it can purchase, which, if we suppose it put to its best use by those that possess it, seems not much to deserve the desire or envy of a wise man. It is certain that, with regard to corporal enjoyment, money can neither open new avenues to pleasure, nor block up the passages of anguish. Disease and infirmity still continue to torture and enfeeble, perhaps exas-

perated by luxury, or promoted by softness. With respect to the mind, it has rarely been observed, that wealth contributes much to quicken the discernment, enlarge the capacity, or elevate the imagination; but may, by hiring flattery, or laying diligence asleep, confirm error, and harden stupidity.

Wealth cannot confer greatness, for nothing can make that great which the decree of nature has ordained to be little. The bramble may be placed in a hot-bed, but can never become an oak. Even royalty itself is not able to give that dignity which it happens not to find, but oppresses feeble minds, though it may elevate the strong. The world has been governed in the name of kings, whose existence has scarcely been perceived by any real effects beyond their own palaces.

When therefore the desire of wealth is taking hold of the heart, let us look round and see how it operates upon those whose industry or fortune has obtained it. When we find them oppressed with their own abundance, luxurious without pleasure, idle without ease, impatient and querulous in themselves, and despised or hated by the rest of mankind, we shall soon be convinced that if the real wants of our condition are satisfied, there remains little to be sought with solicitude, or desired with eagerness.

RAMBLER.

THE REQUISITES TO TRUE FRIENDSHIP.

Idem velle, et idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est.
SALLUST.

To live in friendship, is to have the same desires and the same aversions.

WHEN Socrates was building himself a house at Athens, being asked, by one that observed the littleness of the design, why a man so eminent would not have an abode more suitable to his dignity? he replied, that he should think himself sufficiently accommodated if he could see that narrow habitation filled with real friends. Such was the opinion of this great master of human life, concerning the infrequency of such an union of minds as might deserve the name of friendship, that among the multitudes whom vanity or curiosity, civility or veneration, crowded about him, he did not expect, that very spacious apartments would be necessary to contain all that should regard him with sincere kindness, or adhere to him with steady fidelity.

So many qualities are indeed requisite to the possibility of friendship, and so many accidents must concur to its rise and its continuance, that the greatest part of mankind content themselves without it, and supply its place as they can, with interest and dependance.

Multitudes are unqualified for a constant and warm reciprocation of benevolence, as they are

incapacitated for any other elevated excellence, by perpetual attention to their interest, and unresisting subjection to their passions. Long habits may superinduce inability to deny any desire, or repress, by superior motives, the importunities of any immediate gratification, and an inveterate selfishness will imagine all advantages diminished in proportion as they are communicated.

But not only this hateful and confirmed corruption, but many varieties of disposition, not inconsistent with common degrees of virtue, may exclude friendship from the heart. Some ardent enough in their benevolence, and defective neither in officiousness nor liberality, are mutable and uncertain, soon attracted by new objects, disgusted without offence, and alienated without enmity. Others are soft and flexible, easily influenced by reports or whispers, ready to catch alarms from every dubious circumstance, and to listen to every suspicion which envy and flattery shall suggest, to follow the opinion of every confident adviser, and move by the impulse of the last breath. Some are impatient of contradiction, more willing to go wrong by their own judgment, than to be indebted for a better or a safer way to the sagacity of another, inclined to consider counsel as insult, and inquiry as want of confidence, and to confer their regard on no other terms than unreserved submission and implicit compliance. Some are dark and involved, equally careful to conceal good and bad purposes; and pleased with producing effects by invisible means, and showing their design only in its execution. Others are universally communicative, alike open

to every eye, and equally profuse of their own secrets and those of others, without the necessary vigilance of caution, or the honest arts of prudent integrity, ready to accuse without malice, and to betray without treachery. Any of these may be useful to the community, and pass through the world with the reputation of good purposes and uncorrupted morals, but they are unfit for close and tender intimacies. He cannot properly be chosen for a friend, whose kindness is exhaled by its own warmth, or frozen by the first blast of slander; he cannot be a useful counsellor who will hear no opinion but his own; he will not much invite confidence whose principal maxim is to suspect; nor can the candour and frankness of that man be much esteemed, who spreads his arms to human kind, and makes every man, without distinction, a denizen of his bosom.

That friendship may be at once fond and lasting, there must not only be equal virtue on each part, but virtue of the same kind; not only the same end must be proposed, but the same means must be approved by both. We are often, by superficial accomplishments and accidental endearments, induced to love those whom we cannot esteem; we are sometimes, by great abilities, and incontestible evidences of virtue, compelled to esteem those whom we cannot love. But friendship, compounded of esteem and love, derives from one its tenderness, and its permanence from the other; and therefore requires not only that its candidates should gain the judgment, but that they should attract the affections; that they should not only be firm in the day of distress,

but gay in the hour of jollity; not only useful in exigencies, but pleasing in familiar life; their presence should give cheerfulness as well as courage, and dispel alike the gloom of fear and of melancholy.

To this mutual complacency is generally requisite a uniformity of opinions, at least of those active and conspicuous principles which discriminate parties in government, and sects in religion, and which every day operate more or less on the common business of life. For though great tenderness has, perhaps, been sometimes known to continue between men eminent in contrary factions, yet such friends are to be shown rather as prodigies than examples, and it is no more proper to regulate our conduct by such instances, than to leap a precipice, because some have fallen from it and escaped with life.

It cannot but be extremely difficult to preserve private kindness in the midst of public opposition, in which will necessarily be involved a thousand incidents extending their influence to conversation and privacy. Men engaged, by moral or religious motives, in contrary parties, will generally look with different eyes upon every man, and decide almost every question upon different principles when such occasions of dispute happen. to comply is to betray our cause, and to maintain friendship by ceasing to deserve it; to be silent is to lose the happiness and dignity of independence, to live in perpetual constraint, and to desert, if not to betray: and who shall determine which of two friends shall yield, where neither believes himself mistaken, and both confess the

importance of the question? What then remains but contradiction and debate? And from those what can be expected, but acrimony, and vehemence, the insolence of triumph, the vexation of defeat, and, in time, a weariness of contest, and an extinction of benevolence! Exchange of endearments and intercourse of civility may continue, indeed, as boughs may for a while be verdant, when the root is wounded; but the poison of discord is infused, and though the countenance may preserve its smile, the heart is hardening and contracting.

That man will not be long agreeable, whom we see only in times of seriousness, and severity; and, therefore, to maintain the softness and serenity of benevolence, it is necessary that friends partake each other's pleasures as well as cares, and be led to the same diversions by similitude of taste. This is, however, not to be considered as equally indispensable with conformity of principles, because any man may honestly, according to the precepts of Horace, resign the gratifications of taste to the humour of another, and friendship may well deserve the sacrifice of pleasure, though not of conscience.

It was once confessed to me, by a painter, that no professor of his art ever loved another. This declaration is so far justified by the knowledge of life, as to damp the hopes of warm and constant friendship between men whom their studies have made competitors, and whom every favourer and every censurer are hourly inciting against each other. The utmost expectation that experience can warrant, is, that they should

forbear open hostilities and secret machinations, and, when the whole fraternity is attacked, be able to unite against a common foe. Some, however, though few, may perhaps be found, in whom emulation has not been able to overpower generosity, who are distinguished from lower beings by nobler motives than the love of fame, and can preserve the sacred flame of friendship from the gusts of pride, and the rubbish of interest.

Friendship is seldom lasting but between equals, or where the superiority on one side is reduced by some equivalent advantage on the other. Benefits which cannot be repaid, and obligations which cannot be discharged, are not commonly found to increase affection; they excite gratitude indeed, and heighten veneration; but commonly take away that easy freedom and familiarity of intercourse, without which, though there may be fidelity, and zeal, and admiration, there cannot be friendship. Thus imperfect are all earthly blessings; the great effect of friendship is beneficence, yet by the first act of uncommon kindness it is endangered, like plants that bear their fruit and die. Yet this consideration ought not to restrain bounty, or repress compassion; for duty is to be preferred before convenience, and he that loses part of the pleasures of friendship by his generosity, gains in its place the gratulation of his conscience.

RAMBLER.

OBIDAH AND THE HERMIT, AN EASTERN STORY.

——*Garrit aniles*
Ex re fabellas.—— Hor.

The cheerful sage, when solemn dictates fail,
Conceals the moral counsel in a tale.

Obidah, the son of Abensina, left the caravansera early in the morning, and pursued his journey through the plains of Indostan. He was fresh and vigorous with rest; he was animated with hope; he was incited by desire; he walked swiftly forward over the vallies, and saw the hills gradually rising before him. As he passed along, his ears were delighted with the morning song of the bird of paradise, he was fanned by the last flutters of the sinking breeze, and sprinkled with dew by groves of spices; he sometimes contemplated the towering height of the oak, monarch of the hills; and sometimes caught the gentle fragrance of the primrose, eldest daughter of the spring: all his senses were gratified, and all care was banished from his heart.

Thus he went on till the sun approached his meridian, and the increasing heat prayed upon his strength; he then looked round about him for some more commodious path. He saw, on his right hand, a grove that seemed to wave its shades as a sign of invitation; he entered it, and found

the coolness and verdure irresistibly pleasant. He did not, however, forget whither he was travelling, but found a narrow way bordered with flowers, which appeared to have the same direction with the main road, and was pleased that by this happy experiment, he had found means to unite pleasure with business, and to gain the rewards of diligence without suffering its fatigue. He therefore, still continued to walk for a time without the least remission of his ardour, except that he was sometimes tempted to stop by the music of the birds whom the heat had assembled in the shade; and sometimes amused himself with plucking the flowers that covered the banks on either side, or the fruits that hung upon the branches. At last the green path began to decline from its first tendency, and to wind among hills and thickets, cooled with fountains and murmuring with water-falls. Here Obidah paused for a time, and began to consider whether it were longer safe to forsake the known and common track; but remembering that the heat was now in its greatest violence, and that the plain was dusty and uneven, he resolved to pursue the new path which he supposed only to make a few meanders, in compliance with the varieties of the ground, and to end at last in the common road.

Having thus calmed his solicitude, he renewed his pace, though he suspected that he was not gaining ground. This uneasiness of his mind inclined him to lay hold on every new object, and give way to every sensation that might sooth or divert him. He listened to every echo, he

mounted every hill for a fresh prospect, he turned aside to every cascade, and pleased himself with tracing the course of a gentle river that rolled among the trees, and watered a large region with innumerable circumvolutions. In these amusements the hours passed away uncounted, his deviations had perplexed his memory, and he knew not towards what point to travel. He stood pensive and confused, afraid to go forward lest he should go wrong, yet conscious that the time of loitering was now past. While he was thus tortured with uncertainty, the sky was overspread with clouds, the day vanished from before him, and a sudden tempest gathered round his head. He was now roused by his danger to a quick and painful remembrance of his folly; he now saw how happiness is lost when ease is consulted; he lamented the unmanly impatience that prompted him to seek shelter in the grove, and despised the petty curiosity that led him on from trifle to trifle. While he was thus reflecting, the air grew blacker, and a clap of thunder broke his meditation.

He now resolved to do what remained yet in his power, to tread back the ground which he had passed, and try to find some issue where the wood might open into the plain. He prostrated himself on the ground, and commended his life to the Lord of nature. He rose with confidence and tranquillity, and pressed on, with his sabre in his hand, for the beasts of the desert were in motion, and on every hand were heard the mingled howls of rage and fear, and ravage and expiration; all the horrors of darkness and soli-

tude surrounded him: the winds roared in the woods, and the torrents tumbled from the hills,

——χείμαῤῥοι ποταμοὶ κατ ὄρηφι ῥέοντες
Εἰς μισγαγκειαν συμβάλλετον ὄβριμον ὕδωρ,
Τόνδε τε τηλόσε δοῦπος ἀν' ὑλοεσσαν ἔκλυε ποιμήν.

Work'd into sudden rage by wintry show'rs,
Down the steep hill the roaring torrent pours!
The mountain shepherd hears the distant noise.

Thus forlorn and distressed, he wandered through the wild, without knowing whither he was going, or whether he was every moment drawing nearer to safety or to destruction. At length not fear but labour began to overcome him; his breath grew short, and his knees trembled, and he was on the point of lying down in resignation to his fate, when he beheld through the brambles the glimmer of a taper. He advanced towards the light, and finding that it proceeded from the cottage of a hermit, he called humbly at the door, and obtained admission. The old man set before him such provisions as he had collected for himself, on which Obidah fed with eagerness and gratitude.

When the repast was over, "Tell me," said the hermit, "by what chance thou hast been brought hither; I have been now twenty years an inhabitant of the wilderness, in which I never saw a man before." Obidah then related the occurrences of his journey, without any concealment or palliation.

"Son," said the hermit, "let the errors and follies, the dangers and escape of this day, sink

deep into thy heart. Remember, my son, that human life is the journey of a day. We rise in the morning of youth, full of vigour and full of expectation; we set forward with spirit and hope, with gaiety and with diligence, and travel on awhile in the straight road of piety towards the mansions of rest. In a short time we remit our favour, and endeavour to find some mitigation of our duty, and some more easy means of obtaining the same end. We then relax our vigour, and resolve no longer to be terrified with crimes at a distance, but rely upon our own constancy, and venture to approach what we resolve never to touch. We thus enter the bowers of ease, and repose in the shades of security. Here the heart softens, and vigilance subsides; we are then willing to inquire whether another advance cannot be made, and whether we may not, at least, turn our eyes upon the gardens of pleasure. We approach them with scruple and hesitation; we enter them, but enter timorous and trembling, and always hope to pass through them without losing the road of virtue, which we, for awhile, keep in our sight, and to which we propose to return. But temptation succeeds temptation, and one compliance prepares us for another; we in time lose the happiness of innocence, and solace our disquiet with sensual gratifications. By degrees we let fall the remembrance of our original intention, and quit the only adequate object of rational desire. We entangle ourselves in business, immerge ourselves in luxury, and rove through the labyrinths of inconstancy, till the darkness of old age begins to

invade us, and disease and anxiety obstruct our way. We then look back upon our lives with horror, with sorrow, with repentance; and wish, but too often vainly wish, that we had not forsaken the ways of virtue. Happy are they, my son, who shall learn from thy example not to despair, but shall remember, that though the day is past, and their strength is wasted, there yet remains one effort to be made; that reformation is never hopeless, nor sincere endeavours ever unassisted; that the wanderer may at length return after all his errors, and that he who implores strength and courage from above, shall find danger and difficulty give way before him. Go now, my son, to thy repose, commit thyself to the care of Omnipotence, and when the morning calls again to toil, begin anew "thy journey and thy life."

RAMBLER

PASSION NOT TO BE ERADICATED.

-Pauci dignoscere possunt
Vera bona, atque illis multum diversa, remotâ
Erroris nebulâ.

-How few
Know their own good; or, knowing it, pursue?
How void of reason are our hopes and fears? DRYDEN.

THE folly of human wishes and pursuits has always been a standing subject of mirth and declamation, and has been ridiculed and lamented from age to age; till perhaps the fruitless repetition of

complaints and censures may be justly numbered among the subjects of censure and complaint.

Some of these instructors of mankind have not contented themselves with checking the overflows of passion and lopping the exuberance of desire, but have attempted to destroy the root as well as the branches; and not only to confine the mind within bounds, but to smooth it for ever by a dead calm. They have employed reason and eloquence to persuade us, that nothing is worth the wish of a wise man, have represented all earthly good and evil as indifferent, and counted among vulgar errors the dread of pain, and the love of life.

It is almost always the unhappiness of a victorious disputant, to destroy his own authority by claiming too many consequences, or diffusing his proposition to an indefensible extent. When we have heated our zeal in a cause, and elated our confidence with success, we are naturally inclined to pursue the same train of reasoning, to establish some collateral truth, to remove some adjacent difficulty, and to take in the whole comprehension of our system. As a prince, in the ardour of acquisition, is willing to secure his first conquest by the addition of another, add fortress to fortress, and city to city, till despair and opportunity turn his enemies upon him, and he loses in a moment the glory of a reign.

The philosophers having found an easy victory over those desires which we produce in ourselves, and which terminate in some imaginary state of happiness unknown and unattainable, proceeded to make further inroads upon the heart, and at-

tacked at last our senses and our instincts. They continued to war upon nature with arms, by which only folly could be conquered; they therefore lost the trophies of their former combats, and were considered no longer with reverence or regard.

Yet it cannot be with justice denied, that these men have been very useful monitors, and have left many proofs of strong reason, deep penetration, and accurate attention to the affairs of life, which it is now our business to separate from the foam of a boiling imagination, and to apply judiciously to our own use. They have shown that most of the conditions of life, which raise the envy of the timorous, and rouse the ambition of the daring, are empty shows of felicity, which, when they become familiar, lose their power of delighting; and that the most prosperous and exalted have very few advantages over a meaner and more obscure fortune, when their dangers and solicitudes are balanced against their equipage, their banquets, and their palaces.

It is natural for every man uninstructed to murmur at his condition, because, in the general infelicity of life, he feels his own miseries, without knowing that they are common to all the rest of the species; and therefore, though he will not be less sensible of pain by being told that others are equally tormented, he will at least be freed from the temptation of seeking, by perpetual changes, that ease which is nowhere to be found; and, though his disease still continues, he escapes the hazard of exasperating it by remedies.

The gratifications which affluence of wealth,

extent of power, and eminence of reputation confer, must be always, by their own nature, confined to a very small number; and the life of the greater part of mankind must be lost in empty wishes and painful comparisons, were not the balm of philosophy shed upon us, and our discontent at the appearances of an unequal distribution soothed and appeased.

It seemed, perhaps, below the dignity of the great masters of moral learning, to descend to familiar life, and caution mankind against that petty ambition which is known among us by the name of Vanity; which yet had been an undertaking not unworthy of the longest beard, and most solemn austerity. For though the passions of little minds, acting in low stations, do not fill the world with bloodshed and devastations, or mark, by great events, the periods of time, yet they torture the breast on which they seize, infest those that are placed within the reach of their influence, destroy private quiet and private virtue, and undermine insensibly the happiness of the world.

The desire of excellence is laudable, but is very frequently ill directed. We fall, by chance, into some class of mankind, and, without consulting nature or wisdom, resolve to gain their regard by those qualities which they happen to esteem. I once knew a man remarkably dim-sighted, who, by conversing much with country gentlemen, found himself irresistibly determined to sylvan honours. His great ambition was to shoot flying, and he therefore spent whole days in the woods pursuing game; which, before he was near enough to see them, his approach frighted away.

When it happens that the desire tends to objects which produce no competition, it may be overlooked with some indulgence, because, however fruitless or absurd, it cannot have ill effects upon the morals. But most of our enjoyments owe their value to the peculiarity of possession, and when they are rated at too high a value, give occasion to stratagems of malignity, and incite opposition, hatred, and defamation. The contest of two rural beauties for preference and distinction, is often sufficiently keen and rancorous to fill their breasts with all those passions, which are generally thought the curse only of senates, of armies, and of courts, and the rival dancers of an obscure assembly have their partisans and abettors, often not less exasperated against each other than those who are promoting the interests of rival monarchs.

It is common to consider those whom we find infected with an unreasonable regard for trifling accomplishments, as chargeable with all the consequences of their folly, and as the authors of their own unhappiness; but, perhaps, those whom we thus scorn or detest, have more claim to tenderness than has been yet allowed them. Before we permit our severity to break loose upon any fault or error, we ought surely to consider how much we have countenanced or promoted it. We see multitudes busy in the pursuit of riches, at the expense of wisdom and of virtue; but we see the rest of mankind approving their conduct and inciting their eagerness, by paying that regard and deference to wealth, which wisdom and virtue only can deserve. We see women univer-

sally jealous of the reputation of their beauty, and frequently look with contempt on the care with which they study the complexions, endeavour to preserve or to supply the bloom of youth, regulate every ornament, twist their hair into curls, and shade their faces from the weather. We recommend the care of their nobler part, and tell them how little addition is made by all their arts to the graces of the mind. But when was it known that female goodness or knowledge was able to attract that officiousness, or inspire that ardour, which beauty produces whenever it appears? And with what hope can we endeavour to persuade the ladies, that the time spent at the toilet is lost in vanity, when they have every moment some new conviction, that their interest is more effectually promoted by a riband well disposed, than by the brightest act of heroic virtue?

In every instance of vanity it will be found that blame ought to be shared among more than it generally reaches; all who exalt trifles by immoderate praise, or instigate needless emulation by invidious incitements, are to be considered as perverters of reason, and corrupters of the world; and since every man is obliged to promote happiness and virtue, he should be careful not to mislead unwary minds, by appearing to set too high a value upon things by which no real excellence is conferred.

RAMBLER.

THE DANGER OF SUCCEEDING A GREAT AUTHOR.

Legitimumque sonum digitis callemus et aure.

HOR.

By fingers, or by ear, we numbers scan.

ELPHINSTON.

ONE of the ancients has observed, that the burden of government is increased upon princes by the virtues of their immediate predecessors. It is, indeed, always dangerous to be placed in a state of unavoidable comparison with excellence, and the danger is still greater when that excellence is consecrated by death; when envy and interest cease to act against it, and those passions by which it was at first vilified and opposed, now stand in its defence, and turn their vehemence against honest emulation.

He that succeeds a celebrated writer, has the same difficulties to encounter; he stands under the shade of exalted merit, and is hindered from rising to his natural height, by the interception of those beams which should invigorate and quicken him. He applies to that attention which is already engaged, and unwilling to be drawn off from certain satisfaction; or perhaps to an attention already wearied, and not to be recalled to the same object.

One of the old poets congratulates himself that

he has the untrodden regions of Parnassus before him, that his garland will be gathered from plantations which no writer had yet culled. But the imitator treads a beaten walk, and with all his diligence can only hope to find a few flowers or branches untouched by his predecessor, the refuse of contempt, or the omissions of negligence. The Macedonian conqueror, when he was once invited to hear a man that sung like a nightingale, replied with contempt, "that he had heard the nightingale herself;" and the same treatment must every man expect, whose praise is, that he imitates another.

Yet, in the midst of these discouraging reflections, I am about to offer to my reader some observations upon "Paradise Lost," and hope, that, however I may fall below the illustrious writer who has so long dictated to the common wealth of learning, my attempt may not be wholly useless. There are, in every age, new errors to be rectified, and new prejudices to be opposed. False taste is always busy to mislead those that are entering upon the regions of learning; and the traveller, uncertain of his way, and forsaken by the sun, will be pleased to see a fainter orb arise on the horizon, that may rescue him from total darkness, though with weak and borrowed lustre.

Addison, though he has considered this poem under most of the general topics of criticism, has barely touched upon the versification; not probably because he thought the art of numbers unworthy of his notice, for he knew with what minute attention the ancient critics considered

the disposition of syllables, and had himself given hopes of some metrical observations upon the great Roman poet; but being the first who undertook to display the beauties, and point out the defects of Milton, he had many objects at once before him, and passed willingly over those which were most barren of ideas, and required labour rather than genius.

Yet versification, or the art of modulating his numbers, is indispensably necessary to a poet. Every other power by which the understanding is enlightened, or the imagination enchanted, may be exercised in prose. But the poet has this peculiar superiority, that to all the powers which the perfection of every other composition can require, he adds the faculty of joining music with reason, and of acting at once upon the senses and the passions. I suppose there are few who do not feel themselves touched by poetical melody, and who will not confess that they are more or less moved by the same thoughts, as they are conveyed by different sounds, and more affected by the same words in one order than in another. The perception of harmony is indeed conferred upon men in degrees very unequal; but there are none who do not perceive it, or to whom a regular series of proportionate sounds cannot give delight.

In treating on the versification of Milton I am desirous to be generally understood, and shall therefore studiously decline the dialect of grammarians; though; indeed, it is always difficult, and sometimes scarcely possible, to deliver the precepts of an art, without the terms by which

the peculiar ideas of that art are expressed, and which had not been invented but because the language already in use was insufficient. If, therefore, I shall sometimes seem obscure, it may be imputed to this voluntary interdiction, and to a desire of avoiding that offence which is always given by unusual words.

The heroic measure of the English language may be properly considered as pure or mixed. It is pure when the accent rests upon every second syllable through the whole line.

Courage uncertain dangers may abate,
But who can bear th' approach of certain fate? DRYDEN.

Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here, and revels; not in the bought smile
Of harlots loveless, joyless, unendear'd. MILTON.

The accent may be observed, in the second line of Dryden, and the second and fourth of Milton, to repose upon every second syllable.

The repetition of this sound or percussion at equal times, is the most complete harmony of which a single verse is capable, and should therefore be exactly kept in distichs, and generally in the last line of a paragraph, that the ear may rest without any sense of imperfection.

But, to preserve the series of sounds untransposed in a long composition, is not only very difficult, but tiresome and disgusting; for we are soon wearied with the perpetual recurrence of the same cadence. Necessity has there-

fore enforced the mixed measure, in which some variation of the accents is allowed: this, though it always injures the harmony of the line, considered by itself, yet compensates the loss by relieving us from the continual tyranny of the same sound, and makes us more sensible of the harmony of the pure measure.

Of these mixed numbers every poet affords us innumerable instances, and Milton seldom has two pure lines together, as will appear if any of his paragraphs be read with attention merely to the music.

> Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd both stood,
> Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
> The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heav'n,
> Which they beheld; the moon's resplendent globe,
> *And starry pole: thou also mad'st the night,*
> Maker omnipotent! and thou the day,
> Which we, in our appointed work employ'd,
> Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help,
> *And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss*
> Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place,
> For us too large; where thy abundance wants
> Partakers, and uncropp'd falls to the ground;
> But thou hast promis'd from us two a race
> To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
> Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
> And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

In this passage it will be at first observed, that all the lines are not equally harmonious, and upon a nearer examination it will be found that only the fifth and ninth lines are regular, and the rest are more or less licentious with respect to

the accent. In some the accent is equally upon two syllables together, and in both strong. As

> Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd *both stood,*
> *Both* turn'd and under open sky ador'd
> The God that made both sky, *air, earth,* and heav'n.

In others the accent is equally upon two syllables, but upon both weak.

> To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
> Thy goodness *infinite,* both when we wake,
> *And when* we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

In the first pair of syllables the accent may deviate from the rigour of exactness, without any unpleasing diminution of harmony, as may be observed in the lines already cited, and more remarkably in this,

> ——Thou also mad'st the night,
> *Maker* omnipotent! and thou the day.

But, excepting in the first pair of syllables, which may be considered as arbitrary, a poet who, not having the invention or knowledge of Milton, has more need to allure his audience by musical cadences, should seldom suffer more than one aberration from the rule in any single verse.

There are two lines in this passage more remarkably unharmonious:

> —— This delicious place,
> For us too large; *where thy* abundance wants
> Partakers, and uncropp'd *falls* to the ground.

Here the third pair of syllables in the first, and fourth pair in the second verse, have their accents retrograde or inverted; the first syllable being strong or acute, and the second weak. The detriment which the measure suffers by this inversion of the accents is sometimes less perceptible, when the verses are carried one into another, but is remarkably striking in this place, where the vicious verse concludes a period, and is yet more offensive in rhyme, when we regularly attend to the flow of every single line. This will appear by reading a couplet in which Cowley, an author not sufficiently studious of harmony, has committed the same fault—

———his harmless life
Does with substantial blessedness abound,
And the soft wings of peace *cover* him round.

In these the law of metre is very grossly violated, by mingling combinations of sound directly opposite to each other, as Milton expresses in his sonnet, by *committing short and long*, and setting one part of the measure at variance with the rest. The ancients, who had a language more capable of variety than ours, had two kinds of verse, the *Iambic*, consisting of short and long syllables alternately, from which our heroic measure is derived, and the *Trochaic*, consisting in a like alteration of long and short. These were considered as apposites, and conveyed the contrary images of speed and slowness; to confound them, therefore, as in these lines, is to deviate from the established practice. But where the senses are

to judge, authority is not necessary, the ear is sufficient to detect dissonance, nor should I have sought auxiliaries on such an occasion against any name but that of Milton.

RAMBLER.

A CRITICISM ON MILTON'S VERSIFICATION.

Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti;
Audebit, quæcunque parum splendoris habebunt,
Et sine pondere erunt, et honore indigna ferentur,
Verba movere loco, quamvis invita recedent,
Et versentur adhuc intra penetralia Vesta.

HOR.

But he that hath a curious piece design'd,
When he begins must take a censor's mind,
Severe and honest; and what words appear
Too light and trivial, or too weak to bear
The weighty sense, nor worth the reader's care,
Shake off; tho' stubborn, they are loath to move,
And tho' we fancy, dearly tho' we love.

CREECH.

"THERE is no reputation for genius," says Quintilian, "to be gained by writing on things, which, however necessary, have little splendour or show. The height of a building attracts the eye, but the foundations lie without regard. Yet since there is not any way to the top of science, but from the lowest parts, I shall think nothing unconnected with the art of oratory, which he that wants cannot be an orator."

Confirmed and animated by this illustrious precedent, I shall continue my inquiries into Milton's art of versification. Since, however

minute the employment may appear, of analysing lines into syllables, and whatever ridicule may be incurred by a solemn deliberation upon accents and pauses, it is certain that without this petty knowledge no man can be a poet; and that from the proper disposition of single sounds results that harmony that adds force to reason, and gives grace to sublimity; that shackles attention, and governs passions.

That verse may be melodious and pleasing, it is necessary, not only that the words be so ranged as that the accent may fall on its proper place, but that the syllables themselves be so chosen as to flow smoothly into one another. This is to be effected by a proportionate mixture of vowels and consonants, and by tempering the mute consonants with liquids and semivowels. The Hebrew grammarians have observed, that it is impossible to pronounce two consonants without the intervention of a vowel, or without some emission of the breath between one and the other; this is longer and more perceptible, as the sounds of the consonants are less harmonically conjoined, and, by consequence, the flow of the verse is longer interrupted.

It is pronounced by Dryden, that a line of monosyllables is almost always harsh. This, with regard to our language, is evidently true, not because monosyllables cannot compose harmony, but because our monosyllables, being of Teutonic origin, or formed by contraction, commonly begin and end with consonants, as,

——Every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste.

The difference of harmony arising principally from the collocation of vowels and consonants, will be sufficiently conceived by attending to the following passages:

Immortal *Amarant*—there grows
And flow'rs aloft, shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliss through midst of heav'n
Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream!
With these that never fade, the spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams.

The same comparison that I propose to be made between the fourth and sixth verses of this passage, may be repeated between the last lines of the following quotations:

——Under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem.

——Here in close recess
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve first deck'd her nuptial bed;
And heav'nly choirs the hymenean sung.

Milton, whose ear had been accustomed, not only to the music of the ancient tongues, which, however vitiated by our pronunciation, excel all that are now in use, but to the softness of the Italian, the most mellifluous of all modern poetry, seems fully convinced of the unfitness of our language for smooth versification, and is therefore pleased with an opportunity of calling in a softer word to his assistance: for this reason, and I

believe for this only, he sometimes indulges himself in a long series of proper names, and introduces them where they add little but music to his poem.

——The richer seat
Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoil'd
Guiana, whose great city Gerion's sons
Call El Dorado.——

The moon—The Tuscan artist views
At evening, from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands.——

He has indeed been more attentive to his syllables than to his accents, and does not often offend by collisions of consonants or openings of vowels upon each other, at least not more often than other writers who have had less important or complicated subjects to take off their care from the cadence of their lines.

The great peculiarity of Milton's versification compared with that of later poets, is the elision of one vowel before another, or the suppression of the last syllable of a word ending with a vowel, when a vowel begins the following word. As—

———Knowledge
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.

This licence, though now disused in English poetry, was practised by our old writers, and is allowed in many other languages ancient and modern, and therefore the critics on "Paradise

Lost" have, without much deliberation, commended Milton for continuing it. But one language cannot communicate its rules to another. We have already tried and rejected the hexameter of the ancients, the double close of the Italians, and the Alexandrine of the French; and the elision of vowels, however graceful it may seem to other nations, may be very unsuitable to the genius of the English tongue.

There is reason to believe that we have negligently lost part of our vowels, and that the silent *e*, which our ancestors added to most of our monosyllables, was once vocal. By this detruncation of our syllables, our language is overstocked with consonants, and it is more necessary to add vowels to the beginning of words, than to cut them off from the end.

Milton therefore seems to have somewhat mistaken the nature of our language, of which the chief defect is ruggedness and asperity, and has left our harsh cadences yet harsher. But his elisions are not all equally to be censured; in some syllables they may be allowed, and perhaps in a few may be safely imitated. The abscission of a vowel is undoubtedly vicious when it is strongly sounded, and makes, with its associate consonant, a full and audible syllable.

——What he gives,
Spiritual, may to purest spirits be found,
No ingrateful food, and food alike these pure
Intelligential substances require.

Fruits,——Hesperian fables true,
If true, here *only*, and of delicious taste.

——Evening now approach'd,
For we have *also* our evening and our morn.

Of guests he makes them slaves,
Inhospita*bly*, and kills their infant males.

And vital Vir*tue* infus'd, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid mass.——

God made *thee* of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him.

I believe every reader will agree, that in all these passages, though not equally in all, the music is injured, and in some the meaning obscured. There are other lines in which the vowel is cut off, but it is so faintly pronounced in common speech, that the loss of it in poetry is scarcely perceived; and therefore such compliance with thē measure may be allowed.

——Nature breeds
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things
Abomina*ble*, inutter*a ble*; and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd——

——From the shore
They view'd the vast immensura*ble* abyss,
Impenetra*ble*, impal'd with circling fire.

To none communica*ble* in earth or heav'n.

Yet even these contractions increase the roughness of a language too rough already; and though in long poems they be sometimes suffered, it never can be faulty to forbear them.

Milton frequently uses in his poems the hypermetrical or redundant line of eleven syllables.

——Thus it shall befal
Him who to worth in woman over-trusting
Lets her will rule ——

I also err'd in over-much admiring.

Verses of this kind occur almost in every page; but though they are not unpleasing or dissonant, they ought not to be admitted into heroic poetry, since the narrow limits of our language allow us no other distinction of epic and tragic measures, than is afforded by the liberty of changing at will the terminations of the dramatic lines, and bringing them by that relaxation of metrical rigour nearer to prose.

RAMBLER.

THE DANGERS OF IMITATION.

O imitatores, servum pecus! HOR.

Away, ye imitators, servile herd!

ELPHINSTON.

I HAVE been informed by a letter from one of the universities, that among the youth from whom the next swarm of reasoners is to learn philosophy, and the next flight of beauties to hear elegies and sonnets, there are many, who, instead of endeavouring, by books and meditation, to form their own opinions, content themselves with the secondary knowledge, which a

convenient bench in a coffee-house can supply; and without any examination or distinction, adopt the criticisms and remarks, which happen to drop from those who have risen, by merit or fortune, to reputation and authority.

These humble retailers of knowledge my correspondent stigmatizes with the name of Echoes; and seems desirous that they should be made ashamed of lazy submission, and animated to attempts after new discoveries, and original sentiments.

It is very natural for young men to be vehement, acrimonious, and severe. For as they seldom comprehend at once all the consequences of a position, or perceive the difficulties by which cooler and more experienced reasoners are restrained from confidence, they form their conclusions with great precipitance. Seeing nothing that can darken or embarrass the question, they expect to find their own opinion universally prevalent, and are inclined to impute uncertainty and hesitation to want of honesty, rather than of knowledge. I may, perhaps, therefore, be reproached by my lively correspondent, when it shall be found, that I have no inclination to persecute these collectors of fortuitous knowledge with the severity required: yet, as I am now too old to be much pained by hasty censure, I shall not be afraid of taking into protection those whom I think condemned without a sufficient knowledge of their cause.

He that adopts the sentiments of another, whom he has reason to believe wiser than himself, is only to be blamed when he claims the honours

which are not due but to the author, and endeavours to deceive the world into praise and veneration; for, to learn, is the proper business of youth; and whether we increase our knowledge by books or by conversation, we are equally indebted to foreign assistance.

The greater part of students are not born with abilities to construct systems, or advance knowledge; nor can have any hope beyond that of becoming intelligent hearers in the schools of art, of being able to comprehend what others discover, and to remember what others teach. Even those to whom Providence hath allotted greater strength of understanding, can expect only to improve a single science. In every other part of learning, they must be content to follow opinions, which they are not able to examine; and, even in that which they claim as peculiarly their own, can seldom add more than some small particle of knowledge to the hereditary stock devolved to them from ancient times, the collective labour of a thousand intellects.

In science, which, being fixed and limited, admits of no other variety than such as arises from new methods of distribution, or new arts of illustration, the necessity of following the traces of our predecessors is indisputably evident; but there appears no reason why imagination should be subject to the same restraint. It might be conceived, that of those who profess to forsake the narrow paths of truth, every one may deviate towards a different point, since, though rectitude is uniform and fixed, obliquity may be infinitely diversified. The roads of science are narrow, so

that they who travel them, must either follow or meet one another; but in the boundless regions of possibility, which fiction claims for her dominion, there are surely a thousand recesses unexplored, a thousand flowers unplucked, a thousand fountains unexhausted, combinations of imagery yet unobserved, and races of ideal inhabitants not hitherto described.

Yet, whatever hope may persuade, or reason evince, experience can boast of very few additions to ancient fable. The wars of Troy, and the travels of Ulysses, have furnished almost all succeeding poets with incidents, characters, and sentiments. The Romans are confessed to have attempted little more than to display in their own tongue the inventions of the Greeks. There is, in all their writings, such a perpetual recurrence of allusions to the tales of the fabulous age, that they must be confessed often to want that power of giving pleasure which novelty supplies; nor can we wonder that they excelled so much in the graces of diction, when we consider how rarely they were employed in search of new thoughts.

The warmest admirers of the great Mantuan poet can extol him for little more than the skill with which he has, by making his hero both a traveller and a warrior, united the beauties of the Iliad and the Odyssey in one composition; yet his judgment was perhaps sometimes overborne by his avarice of the Homeric treasures; and for fear of suffering a sparkling ornament to be lost, he has inserted it where it cannot shine with its original splendour.

When Ulysses visited the infernal regions, he found, among the heroes that perished at Troy, his competitor Ajax, who, when the arms of Achilles were adjudged to Ulysses, died by his own hand, in the madness of disappointment. He still appeared to resent, as on earth, his loss and disgrace. Ulysses endeavoured to pacify him with praises and submission; but Ajax walked away without reply. This passage has always been considered as eminently beautiful; because Ajax, the haughty chief, the unlettered soldier, of unshaken courage, of immoveable constancy, but without the power of recommending his own virtues by eloquence, or enforcing his assertions by any other argument than the sword, had no way of making his anger known but by gloomy sullenness and dumb ferocity. His hatred of a man whom he conceived to have defeated him only by volubility of tongue, was therefore naturally shown by silence, more contemptuous and piercing than any words that so rude an orator could have found, and by which he gave his enemy no opportunity of exerting the only power in which he was superior.

When Æneas is sent by Virgil to the shades, he meets Dido, the queen of Carthage, whom his perfidy had hurried to the grave; he accosts her with tenderness and excuses; but the lady turns away like Ajax in mute disdain. She turns away like Ajax; but she resembles him in none of those qualities which give either dignity or propriety to silence. She might, without any departure from the tenour of her conduct, have burst out, like other injured women, into clamour, reproach, and denunciation; but Virgil had

his imagination full of Ajax, and therefore could not prevail on himself to teach Dido any other mode of resentment.

If Virgil could be thus seduced by imitation, there will be little hope that common wits should escape; and accordingly we find that, besides the universal and acknowledged practice of copying the ancients, there has prevailed in every age a particular species of fiction. At one time, all truth was conveyed in allegory; at another, nothing was seen but in a vision; at one period, all the poets followed sheep, and every event produced a pastoral; at another, they busied themselves wholly in giving directions to a painter.

It is indeed easy to conceive why any fashion should become popular, by which idleness is favoured, and imbecility assisted; but surely no man of genius can much applaud himself for repeating a tale with which the audience is already tired, and which could bring no honour to any but its inventor.

There are, I think, two schemes of writing, on which the laborious wits of the present time employ their faculties. One is the adaptation of sense to all the rhymes which our language can supply to some words that makes the burden of the stanza; but this, as it has been only used in a kind of amorous burlesque, can scarcely be censured with much acrimony. The other is the imitation of Spenser, which, by the influence of some men of learning and genius, seems likely to gain upon the age, and therefore deserves to be more attentively considered.

To imitate the fictions and sentiments of Spenser can incur no reproach, for allegory is perhaps one of the most pleasing vehicles of instruction. But I am very far from extending the same respect to his diction or his stanza. His style was in his own time allowed to be vicious, so darkened with old words and peculiarities of phrase, and so remote from common use, that Johnson boldly pronounces him *to have written no language*. His stanza is at once difficult and unpleasing; tiresome to the ear by its uniformity, and to the attention by its length. It was at first formed in imitation of the Italian poets, without due regard to the genius of our language. The Italians have little variety of termination, and were forced to contrive such a stanza as might admit the greatest number of similar rhymes; but our words end with so much diversity, that it is seldom convenient for us to bring more than two of the same sound together. If it be justly observed by Milton, that rhyme obliges poets to express their thoughts in improper terms, these improprieties must always be multiplied, as the difficulty of rhyme is increased by long concatenations.

The imitators of Spenser are indeed not very rigid censors of themselves, for they seem to conclude that, when they have disfigured their lines with a few obsolete syllables, they have accomplished their design, without considering that they ought not only to admit old words, but to avoid new. The laws of imitation are broken by every word introduced since the time of Spenser, as the character of Hector is

violated by quoting Aristotle in the play. It would indeed be difficult to exclude from a long poem all modern phrases, though it is easy to sprinkle it with gleanings of antiquity. Perhaps, however, the style of Spenser might by long labour be justly copied; but life is surely given us for higher purposes than to gather what our ancestors have wisely thrown away, and to learn what is of no value, but because it has been forgotten.

RAMBLER.

A CRITICISM ON THE ENGLISH HISTORIANS.

Nescio qua natale solum dulcedine cunctos
Ducit. OVID.

By secret charms our native land attracts.

NOTHING is more subject to mistake and disappointment than anticipated judgment concerning the easiness or difficulty of any undertaking, whether we form our opinion from the performances of others, or from abstracted contemplation of the thing to be attempted.

Whatever is done skilfully appears to be done with ease; and art, when it is once matured to habit, vanishes from observation. We are therefore, more powerfully excited to emulation, by those who have attained the highest degree of excellence, and whom we can therefore with least reason hope to equal.

In adjusting the probability of success by a previous consideration of the undertaking, we are equally in danger of deceiving ourselves. It is never easy, nor often possible, to comprise the series of any process with all its circumstances, incidents, and variations, in a speculative scheme. Experience soon shows us the tortuosities of imaginary rectitude, the complications of simplicity, and the asperities of smoothness. Sudden difficulties often start up from the ambushes of art, stop the career of activity, repress gaiety of confidence, and, when we imagine ourselves almost at the end of our labours, drive us back to new plans and different measures.

There are many things which we every day see others unable to perform, and perhaps have even ourselves miscarried in attempting; and yet can hardly allow to be difficult; nor can we forbear to wonder afresh at every new failure, or to promise certainty of success to our next essay; but when we try, the same hindrances recur, the same inability is perceived, and the vexation of disappointment must again be suffered.

Of the various kinds of speaking or writing, which serve necessity, or promote pleasure, none appears so artless or easy as simple narration; for what should make him that knows the whole order and progress of an affair unable to relate it? Yet we hourly find such as endeavour to entertain or instruct us by recitals, clouding the facts which they intend to illustrate, and losing themselves and their auditors in wilds and mazes, in digression and confusion. When we have

congratulated ourselves upon a new opportunity of inquiry, and new means of information, it often happens that, without designing either deceit or concealment, without ignorance of the fact, or unwillingness to disclose it, the relator fills the ear with empty sounds, and harasses the attention with fruitless impatience, and disturbs the imagination by a tumult of events, without order of time, or train of consequence.

It is natural to believe, upon the same principle, that no writer has a more easy task than the historian. The philosopher has the works of omniscience to examine; and is therefore engaged in disquisitions, to which finite intellects are utterly unequal. The poet trusts to his invention, and is not only in danger of those inconsistencies, to which every one is exposed by departure from truth; but may be censured, as well for deficiencies of matter, as for irregularity of disposition, or impropriety of ornament. But the happy historian has no other labour than of gathering what tradition pours down before him, or records treasure for his use. He has only the actions and designs of men like himself to conceive and to relate; he is not to form, but copy characters, and therefore is not blamed for the inconsistency of statesmen, the injustice of tyrants, or the cowardice of commanders. The difficulty of making variety consistent, or uniting probability with surprise, needs not to disturb him; the manners and actions of his personages are already fixed; his materials are provided and put into his hands, and he is at leisure to employ all his powers in arranging and displaying them.

Yet, even with these advantages, very few in any age have been able to raise themselves to reputation by writing histories; and among the innumerable authors, who fill every nation with accounts of their ancestors, or undertake to transmit to futurity the events of their own time, the greater part, when fashion and novelty have ceased to recommend them, are of no other use than chronological memorials, which necessity may sometimes require to be consulted, but which fright away curiosity, and disgust delicacy.

It is observed, that our nation, which has produced so many authors eminent for almost every other species of literary excellence, has been hitherto remarkably barren of historical genius; and, so far has this defect raised prejudices against us, that some have doubted whether an Englishman can stop at that mediocrity of style, or confine his mind to that even tenor of imagination, which narrative requires.

They who can believe that nature has so capriciously distributed understanding, have surely no claim to the honour of serious confutation. The inhabitants of the same country have opposite characters in different ages; the prevalence or neglect of any particular study can proceed only from the accidental influence of some temporary cause; and if we have failed in history, we can have failed only because history has not hitherto been diligently cultivated.

But how is it evident, that we have not historians among us, whom we may venture to place in comparison with any that the neighbouring

nations can produce? The attempt of Raleigh, is deservedly celebrated for the labour of his researches, and the elegance of his style; but he has endeavoured to exert his judgment more than his genius; to select facts, rather than adorn them; and has produced an historical dissertation, but seldom risen to the majesty of history.

The works of Clarendon deserve more regard. His diction is indeed neither exact in itself, nor suited to the purpose of history. It is the effusion of a mind crowded with ideas, and desirous of imparting them; and therefore always accumulating words, and involving one clause and sentence in another. But there is in his negligence a rude, inartificial majesty, which, without the nicety of laboured elegance, swells the mind by its plenitude and diffusion. His narration is not perhaps sufficiently rapid, being stopped too frequently by particularities, which, though they might strike the author who was present at the transactions, will not equally detain the attention of posterity. But his ignorance or carelessness of the art of writing is amply compensated by his knowledge of nature and of policy; the wisdom of his maxims, the justness of his reasoning, and the variety, distinctness, and strength of his characters.

But none of our writers can, in my opinion, justly contest the superiority of Knolles, who, in his history of the Turks, has displayed all the excellencies that narration can admit. His style, though somewhat obscured by time, and sometimes vitiated by false wit, is pure, nervous, elevated, and clear. A wonderful multiplicity of

events is so artfully arranged, and so distinctly explained, that each facilitates the knowledge of the next. Whether a new personage is introduced, the reader is prepared by his character for his actions; when a nation is first attacked, or city besieged, he is made acquainted with its history, or situation; so that a great part of the world is brought into view. The descriptions of this author are without minuteness, and the digressions without ostentation. Collateral events are so artfully woven into the contexture of his principal story, that they cannot be disjoined without leaving it lacerated and broken. There is nothing turgid in his dignity, nor superfluous in his copiousness. His orations only, which he feigns, like the ancient historians, to have been pronounced on remarkable occasions, are tedious and languid; and since they are merely the voluntary sports of imagination, prove how much the most judicious and skilful may be mistaken, in the estimate of their own powers.

Nothing could have sunk this author in obscurity but the remoteness and barbarity of the people whose story he relates. It seldom happens, that all circumstances concur to happiness or fame. The nation which produced this great historian, has the grief of seeing his genius employed upon a foreign and uninteresting subject; and that writer, who might have secured perpetuity to his name, by a history of his own country has exposed himself to the danger of oblivion, by recounting enterprises and revolutions, of which none desire to be informed.

RAMBLER.

THE FOLLY OF COWARDICE AND INACTIVITY.

———*Nunc, o nunc, Dædale, dixit,*
Materiam, qua sis ingeniosus habes.
Possidet en terras, et possidet æquora, Minos:
Nec tellus nostræ, nec patet unda fugæ.
Restat iter cœlo: cœlo tentabimus ire.
Da veniam cœpto, Jupiter alte, meo. OVID.

Now, Dædalus, behold, by fate assign'd,
A task proportion'd to thy mighty mind!
Unconquer'd bars on earth and sea withstand;
Thine, Minos, is the main, and thine the land.
The skies are open—let us try the skies:
Forgive, great Jove, the daring enterprise.

MORALISTS, like other writers, instead of casting their eyes abroad in the living world, and endeavouring to form maxims of practice and new hints of theory, content their curiosity with that secondary knowledge which books afford, and think themselves entitled to reverence by a new arrangement of an ancient system, or new illustration of established principles. The sage precepts of the first instructors of the world are transmitted from age to age with little variation, and echoed from one author to another, not perhaps without some loss of their original force at every repercussion.

I know not whether any other reason than this idleness of imitation can be assigned for that uniform and constant partiality, by which some

vices have hitherto escaped censure, and some virtues wanted recommendation; nor can I discover why else we have been warned only against part of our enemies, while the rest have been suffered to steal upon us without notice; why the heart has on one side been doubly fortified, and laid open on the other to the incursions of error, and the ravages of vice.

Among the favourite topics of moral declamation, may be numbered the miscarriages of imprudent boldness, and the folly of attempts beyond our power. Every page of every philosopher is crowded with examples of temerity that sunk under burdens which she laid upon herself, and called out enemies to battle by whom she was destroyed.

Their remarks are too just to be disputed, and too salutary to be rejected; but there is likewise some danger lest timorous prudence should be inculcated, till courage and enterprise are wholly repressed, and the mind congealed in perpetual inactivity by the fatal influence of frigorific wisdom.

Every man should, indeed, carefully compare his force with his undertaking; for though we ought not to live only for our own sakes, and though therefore danger or difficulty should not be avoided merely because we may expose ourselves to misery or disgrace; yet it may be justly required of us, not to throw away our lives upon inadequate and hopeless designs, since we might, by a just estimate of our abilities, become more useful to mankind.

There is an irrational contempt of danger,

which approaches nearly to the folly, if not guilt, of suicide; there is a ridiculous perseverance in impracticable schemes, which is justly punished with ignominy and reproach. But in the wide regions of probability, which are the proper province of prudence and election, there is always room to deviate on either side of rectitude without rushing against apparent absurdity; and, according to the inclinations of nature, or the impressions of precept, the daring and the cautious may move in different directions without touching upon rashness or cowardice.

That there is a middle path which it is every man's duty to find, and to keep, is unanimously confessed: but it is likewise acknowledged that this middle path is so narrow, that it cannot easily be discovered, and so little beaten, that there are no certain marks by which it can be followed: the care therefore of all those who conduct others has been, that whenever they decline into obliquities, they should tend towards the side of safety.

It can, indeed, raise no wonder that temerity has been generally censured; for it is one of the vices with which few can be charged, and which therefore great numbers are ready to condemn. It is the vice of noble and generous minds, the exuberance of magnanimity, and the ebullition of genius: and is therefore not regarded with much tenderness, because it never flatters us by that appearance of softness and imbecility which is commonly necessary to conciliate compassion. But if the same attention had been applied to the search of arguments against the folly of pre-

supposing impossibilities and anticipating frustration, I know not whether many would not have been roused to usefulness, who, having been taught to confound prudence with timidity, never ventured to excel, lest they should unfortunately fail.

It is necessary to distinguish our own interest from that of others, and that distinction will perhaps assist us in fixing the just limits of caution and adventurousness. In an undertaking that involves the happiness or the safety of many, we have certainly no right to hazard more than is allowed by those who partake the danger; but where only ourselves can suffer by miscarriage, we are not confined within such narrow limits; and still less is the reproach of temerity, when numbers will receive advantage by success, and only one be incommoded by failure.

Men are generally willing to hear precepts by which ease is favoured; and as no resentment is raised by general representations of human folly, even in those who are most eminently jealous of comparative reputation, we confess, without reluctance, that vain man is ignorant of his own weakness, and therefore frequently presumes to attempt what he can never accomplish; but it ought likewise to be remembered, that man is no less ignorant of his own powers, and might perhaps have accomplished a thousand designs, which the prejudices of cowardice restrained him from attempting.

It is observed in the golden verses of Pythagoras, that *Power is never far from necessity.*

The vigour of the human mind quickly appears, when there is no longer any place for doubt and hesitation, when diffidence is absorbed in the sense of danger, or overwhelmed by some resistless passion. We then soon discover, that difficulty is, for the most part, the daughter of idleness, that the obstacles with which our way seemed to be obstructed were only phantoms, which we believed real, because we durst not advance to a loose examination, and we learn that it is impossible to determine without experience how much constancy may endure, or perseverance perform.

But whatever pleasure may be found in the review of distresses when art or courage has surmounted them, few will be persuaded to wish that they may be awakened by want or terror to the conviction of their own abilities. Every one should therefore endeavour to invigorate himself by reason and reflection, and determine to exert the latent force that nature may have reposed in him, before the hour of exigence comes upon him, and compulsion shall torture him to diligence. It is below the dignity of a reasonable being to owe that strength to necessity which ought always to act at the call of choice, or to need any other motive to industry than the desire of performing his duty.

Reflections that may drive away despair, cannot be wanting to him who considers how much life is now advanced beyond the state of naked, undisciplined, uninstructed nature. Whatever has been effected for convenience or elegance, while it was yet unknown, was believed impossi-

ble; and therefore would never have been attempted, had not some, more daring than the rest, adventured to bid defiance to prejudice and censure. Nor is there yet any reason to doubt that the same labour would be rewarded with the same success. There are qualities in the products of nature yet undiscovered, and combinations in the powers of art yet untried. It is the duty of every man to endeavour that something may be added by his industry to the hereditary aggregate of knowledge and happiness. To add much can indeed be the lot of few, but to add something, however little, every one may hope; and of every honest endeavour, it is certain, that, however unsuccessful, it will be at last rewarded.

RAMBLER.

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF SAMSON AGONISTES.

——*Sit quod vis simplex duntaxat et unum.* HOR.

Let every piece be simple and be one.

IT is required by Aristotle to the perfection of a tragedy, and is equally necessary to every other species of regular composition, that it should have a beginning, a middle, and an end. "The beginning, says he, is that which has nothing necessarily previous, but to which that which follows is naturally consequent; the end, on the contrary, is that which by necessity, or at least

according to the common course of things, succeeds something else, but which implies nothing consequent to itself; the middle is connected on one side to something that naturally goes before, and on the other to something that naturally follows it."

Such is the rule laid down by this great critic, for the disposition of the different parts of a well constituted fable. It must begin, where it may be made intelligible without introduction; and end, where the mind is left in repose, without expectation of any farther event. The intermediate passages must join the last effect to the first cause, by a regular and unbroken concatenation; nothing must be therefore inserted which does not apparently arise from something foregoing, and properly make way for something that succeeds it.

This precept is to be understood in its rigour only with respect to great and essential events, and cannot be extended in the same force to minuter circumstances and arbitrary decorations, which yet are more happy, as they contribute more to the main design; for it is always a proof of extensive thought and accurate circumspection, to promote various purposes by the same act, and the idea of an ornament admits use, though it seems to exclude necessity.

Whoever purposes, as it is expressed by Milton, *to build the lofty rhyme,* must acquaint himself with this law of poetical architecture, and take care that his edifice be solid as well as beautiful; that nothing stand single or independent, so as that it may be taken away without injuring the

rest; but that, from the foundation to the pinnacle, one part rest firm upon another.

This regular and consequential distribution is, among common authors, frequently neglected; but the failures of those, whose example can have no influence, may be safely overlooked, nor is it of much use to recal obscure and unregarded names to memory for the sake of sporting with their infamy. But if there is any writer whose genius can embellish impropriety, and whose authority can make error venerable, his works are the proper objects of critical inquisition. To expunge faults where there are no excellencies, is a task equally useless with that of the chemist, who employs the arts of separation and refinement, upon ore in which no precious metal is contained to reward his operations.

The tragedy of Samson Agonistes has been celebrated as the second work of the great author of Paradise Lost, and opposed, with all the confidence of triumph, to the dramatic performances of other nations. It contains indeed just sentiments, maxims of wisdom, and oracles of piety, and many passages written with the ancient spirit of choral poetry, in which there is a just and pleasing mixture of Seneca's moral declamation, with the wild enthusiasm of the Greek writers. It is therefore worthy of examination, whether a performance thus illuminated with genius, and enriched with learning, is composed according to the indispensable laws of Aristotelian criticism: and, omitting at present all other considerations, whether it exhibits a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The beginning is undoubtedly beautiful and proper, opening with a graceful abruptness, and proceeding naturally to a mournful recital of facts necessary to be known:

Samson. A little onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little farther on;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun and shade;
There I am wont to sit when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoin'd me.—
—O wherefore was my birth from heav'n foretold
Twice by an angel?—
—Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd,
As of a person separate to God,
Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out?
—Whom have I to complain of but myself?
Who this high gift of strength, committed to me;
In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,
Under the seal of silence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman must reveal it.

His soliloquy is interrupted by a chorus or company of men of his own tribe, who condole his miseries, extenuate his fault, and conclude with a solemn vindication of divine justice. So that at the conclusion of the first act, there is no design laid, no discovery made, nor any disposition formed, towards the subsequent event.

In the second act, Manoah, the father of Samson, comes to seek his son, and, being shown him by the chorus, breaks out into lamentations of his misery, and comparisons of his present with his former state, representing to him the igno-

miny which his religion suffers, by the festival this day celebrated in honour of Dagon, to whom the idolaters ascribed his overthrow:

> -Thou bear'st
> Enough, and more, the burthen of that fault;
> Bitterly hast thou paid and still art paying
> That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains:
> This day the Philistines a pop'lar feast
> Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclaim
> Great pomp and sacrifice, and praises loud
> To Dagon, as their God, who hath deliver'd
> Thee, Samson, bound and blind, into their hands,
> Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.

Samson, touched with this reproach, makes a reply equally penitential and pious, which his father considers as the effusion of prophetic confidence:

> *Samson.* ——————God be sure,
> Will not connive or linger thus provok'd,
> But will arise and his great name assert:
> Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
> Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
> Of all these boasted trophies won on me.
> *Man.* With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
> I as a prophecy receive; for God,
> Nothing more certain, will not long defer
> To vindicate the glory of his name.

This part of the dialogue, as it might tend to animate or exasperate Samson, cannot, I think, be censured as wholly superfluous; but the succeeding dispute, in which Samson contends to

die, and which his father breaks off, that he may go to solicit his release, is only valuable for its own beauties, and has no tendency to introduce any thing that follows it.

The next event of the drama is the arrival of Delilah, with all her graces, artifices, and allurements. This produces dialogue, in a very high degree elegant and instructive, from which she retires, after she has exhausted her persuasions; and is no more seen nor heard of; nor has her visit any effect but that of raising the character of Samson.

In the fourth act enters Harapha, the giant of Gath, whose name had never been mentioned before, and who has now no other motive of coming, than to see the man whose strength and actions are so loudly celebrated:

> *Harapha*——Much I have heard
> Of thy prodigious might, and feats perform'd
> Incredible to me; in this displeas'd
> That I was never present in the place
> Of those encounters, where we might have tried
> Each other's force in camp or listed fields:
> And now am come to see of whom such noise
> Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
> If thy appearance answer loud report.

Samson challenges him to the combat; and, after an interchange of reproaches, elevated by repeated defiance on one side, and imbittered by contemptuous insults on the other, Harapha retires; we then hear it determined, by Samson and the chorus, that no consequence good or bad will proceed from their interview:

Chorus. He will directly to the lords, I fear,
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other farther to afflict thee.
Sams. He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise,
Whether he durst accept the offer or not;
And that he durst not, plain enough appear'd.

At last, in the fifth act, appears a messenger from the lords, assembled at the festival of Dagon, with a summons, by which Samson is required to come and entertain them with some proof of his strength. Samson, after a short expostulation, dismisses him, with a firm and resolute refusal; but, during the absence of the messenger, having awhile defended the propriety of his conduct, he at last declares himself moved by a secret impulse to comply, and utters some dark presages of a great event to be brought to pass by his agency, under the direction of Providence:

Sams. Be of good courage; I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me, which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this messenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour
Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be ought of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By some great act, or of my days the last.

While Samson is conducted off by the messenger, his father returns with hopes of success in his solicitation, upon which he confers with the chorus till their dialogue is interrupted, first by a shout of triumph, and afterwards by screams

of horror and agony. As they stand deliberating where they shall be secure, a man who had been present at the show enters, and relates how Samson, having prevailed on his guide to suffer him to lean against the main pillars of the theatrical edifice, tore down the roof upon the spectators and himself—

——Those two massy pillars,
With horrible confusion, to and fro
He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came, and drew
The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder,
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath.——
——Samson, with these immixt, inevitably
Pull'd down the same destruction on himself.

This is undoubtedly a just and regular catastrophe, and the poem, therefore, has a beginning and an end, which Aristotle himself could not have disapproved; but it must be allowed to want a middle, since nothing passes between the first act and the last, that either hastens or delays the death of Samson. The whole drama, if its superfluities were cut off, would scarcely fill a single act; yet this is the tragedy, which ignorance has admired, and bigotry applauded.

RAMBLER.

THE CRITERIONS OF PLAGIARISM.

——Moveat cornicula risum
Furtivis nudata coloribus.——

HOR.

Lest when the birds their various colors claim,
Stripp'd of his stolen pride, the crow forlorn
Should stand the laughter of the public scorn.

FRANCIS.

AMONG the innumerable practices by which interest or envy have taught those who live upon literary fame to disturb each other at their airy banquets, one of the most common is the charge of plagiarism. When the excellence of a new composition can no longer be contested, and malice is compelled to give way to the unanimity of applause, there is yet this one expedient to be tried, by which the author may be degraded though his work be reverenced; and the excellence which we cannot obscure, may be set at such a distance as not to overpower our fainter lustre.

This accusation is dangerous, because, even when it is false, it may be sometimes urged with probability. Bruyere declares that we are come into the world too late to produce any thing new, that nature and life are pre-occupied, and that description and sentiment have been long ex-

hausted. It is indeed certain, that whoever attempts any common topic, will find unexpected coincidences of his thoughts with those of other writers; nor can the nicest judgment always distinguish accidental similitude from artful imitation. There is likewise a common stock of images, a settled mode of arrangement, and a beaten track of transition, which all authors suppose themselves at liberty to use, and which produce the resemblance generally observable among contemporaries. So that in books which best deserve the name of originals, there is little new beyond the disposition of materials already provided; the same ideas and combinations of ideas have been long in the possession of other hands; and, by restoring to every man his own, as the Romans must have returned to their cots from the possession of the world, so the most inventive and fertile genius would reduce his folios to a few pages. Yet the author who imitates his predecessors only by furnishing himself with thoughts and elegancies out of the same general magazine of literature, can with little more propriety be reproached as a plagiary, than the architect can be censured as a mean copier of Angelo or Wren, because he digs his marble from the same quarry, squares his stones by the same art, and unites them in the columns of the same orders.

Many subjects fall under the consideration of an author, which being limited by nature, can admit only of slight and accidental diversities. All definitions of the same thing must be nearly

the same; and descriptions, which are definitions of a more lax and fanciful kind, must always have in some degree that resemblance to each other which they all have to their object. Different poets describing the spring or the sea would mention the zephyrs and the flowers, the billows and the rocks: reflecting on human life, they would, without any communication of opinions, lament the deceitfulness of hope, the fugacity of pleasure, the fragility of beauty, and the frequency of calamity; and for palliatives of these incurable miseries, they would concur in recommending kindness, temperance, caution, and fortitude.

When therefore there are found in Virgil and Horace two similar passages:

Hæ tibi erunt artes——
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.——

VIRG.

To tame the proud, the fetter'd slave to free:
These are imperial arts, and worthy thee.

DRYDEN.

Imperet bellante prior, jacentem
Lenis in hostem.

HOR.

Let Cæsar spread his conquests far,
Less pleas'd to triumph than to spare—

it is surely not necessary to suppose, with a late critic, that one is copied from the other, since neither Virgil nor Horace can be supposed ignorant of the common duties of humanity, and the virtue of moderation in success.

Cicero and Ovid have on very different occasions remarked how little of the honour of a victory belongs to the general, when his soldiers and his fortune have made their deductions; yet why should Ovid be suspected to have owed to Tully an observation which perhaps occurs to every man that sees or hears of military glories?

Tully observes of Achilles, that had not Homer written, his valour had been without praise—

Nisi Ilias illa extitisset, idem tumulus qui corpus ejus contexerat, nomen ejus obruisset.

Unless the Iliad had been published, his name had been lost in the tomb that covered his body.

Horace tells us with more energy that there were brave men before the wars of Troy, but they were lost in oblivion for want of a poet:

Vixêre fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi; sed omnes illachrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.

Before great Agamemnon reign'd,
Reign'd kings as great as he, and brave,
Whose huge ambition's now contain'd
In the small compass of a grave:
In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown,
No bard had they to make all time their own.

FRANCIS.

Tully inquires; in the same oration, why, but for fame, we disturb a short life with so many fatigues?

Quid est quod in hoc tam exiguo vitæ curriculo et tam brevi tantis nos in laboribus exerceamus?

Why in so small a circuit of life should we employ ourselves in so many fatigues?

Horace enquires in the same manner,

Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?

Why do we aim, with eager strife,
At things beyond the mark of life?

FRANCIS.

when our life is of so short duration, why we form such numerous designs? But Horace, as well as Tully, might discover that records are needful to preserve the memory of actions, and that no records were so durable as poems; either of them might find out that life is short, and that we consume it in unnecessary labour.

There are other flowers of fiction, so widely scattered and so easily cropped, that it is scarcely just to tax the use of them as an act by which any particular writer is despoiled of his garland; for they may be said to have been planted by the ancients in the open road of poetry for the accommodation of their successors, and to be the right of every one that has art to pluck them without injuring their colors or their fragrance. The passage of Orpheus to hell, with the recovery and second loss of Eurydice, have been described after Bœtius by Pope, in such a manner as might justly leave him suspected of imitation, were not the images such as they might both have derived from more ancient writers—

Quæ sontes agitant metu
Ultrices scelerum deæ
Jam mœstæ lacrymis madent,
Non Ixionium caput
Velox præcipitat rota.

The pow'rs of vengeance, while they hear,
Touch'd with compassion, drop a tear;
Ixion's rapid wheel is bound,
Fix'd in attention to the sound. F. Lewis.

Thy stone, O Sysiphus, stands still,
Ixion rests upon his wheel.
And the pale spectres dance!
The furies sink upon their iron beds.

Tandem, vincimur, arbiter
Umbrarum, miserans, ait ——
Donemus, comitem viro,
Emtam carmine, conjugem.

Subdu'd at length, Hell's pitying monarch cry'd,
The song rewarding, let us yield the bride. F. Lewis

He sung, and Hell consented
To hear the poet's prayer;
Stern Proserpine relented,
And gave him back the fair.

Hue, noctis prope terminos
Orpheus Eurydicen suam
Vidit, perdidit, occidit.

Nor yet the golden verge of day begun,
When Orpheus, her unhappy lord,
Eurydice to life restor'd,
At once beheld, and lost, and was undone. F. Lewis.

But soon, too soon, the lover turns his eyes;
Again she falls, again she dies, she dies!

No writer can be fully convicted of imitation, except there is a concurrence of more resemblance than can be imagined to have happened by chance; as where the same ideas are conjoined without any natural series or necessary coherence, or where not only the thought but the words are copied. Thus it can scarcely be doubted, that in the first of the following passages Pope remembered Ovid, and that in the second he copied Crashaw:

Sæpe pater dixit, studium quid inutile tentas?
Mæonides nullus ipse reliquit opes———
Sponte sua carmen numeros veniebat ad aptos,
Et quod conabar scribere, versus erat.

OVID.

Quit, quit this barren trade, my father cry'd;
Ev'n Homer left no riches when he dy'd——
In verse spontaneous flow'd my native strain,
Forc'd by no sweat or labour of the brain.

F. LEWIS.

I left no calling for this idle trade;
No duty broke, no father disobey'd;
While yet a child, ere yet a fool to fame,
I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.

POPE,

——This plain floor,
Believe me, reader, can say more
Than many a braver marble can,
Here lies a truly honest man.

CRASHAW.

This modest stone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly say, Here lies an honest man.

POPE.

Conceits, or thoughts not immediately impressed by sensible objects, or necessarily arising from the coalition, or comparison of common sentiments, may be with great justice suspected, whenever they are found a second time. Thus Waller probably owed to Grotius an elegant compliment:

Here lies the learned Savil's heir,
So early wise, and lasting fair,
That none, except her years they told,
Thought her a child, or thought her old.

WALLER.

Unica lux sæcli, genitoris gloria, nemo
Quem puerum, nemo credidit esse senem.

GROTIUS.

The age's miracle, his father's joy!
Nor old you wou'd pronounce him, nor a boy.

F. LEWIS

And Prior was indebted for a pretty illustration to Alleyne's poetical history of Henry the Seventh.

For nought but light itself, itself can show,
And only kings can write, what kings can do.

ALLEYNE.

Your music's power your music must disclose,
For what light is, 'tis only light that shows,

PRIOR.

And with yet more certainly may the same writer be censured for endeavouring the clandestine appropriation of a thought which he bor-

rowed, surely without thinking himself disgraced, from an epigram of Plato:

Τῇ Παφίῃ τὸ κάτοπτρον· ἐπεὶ τοίη μὲν ὁρᾶσθαι
, Οὐκ ἐθέλω, ὅτη δ' ἦν πάρος, οὐ δύναμαι.

"Venus, take my votive glass,
Since I am not what I was;
What from this day, I shall be,
Venus, let me never see.

As every instance of similitude can not be considered as a proof of imitation, so every imitation ought not to be stigmatized as plagiarism. The adoption of a noble sentiment, or the insertion of a borrowed ornament, may sometimes display so much judgment as will almost compensate for invention: and an inferior genius may, without any imputation of servility, pursue the path of the ancients, provided he declines to tread in their footsteps.

RAMBLER.

CRITICISM ON EPISTOLARY WRITINGS.

——— *Tristia mœstum*
Vultum verba decent, iratum plenæ minarum.

HOR.

Disastrous words can best disaster show;
In angry phrase the angry passions glow,

ELPHINSTON.

"IT was the wisdom," says Seneca, "of ancient times, to consider what is most useful as most

illustrious." If this rule be applied to works of genius, scarcely any species of composition deserves more to be cultivated than the epistolary style, since none is of more various or frequent use, through the whole subordination of human life.

It has yet happened that, among the numerous writers which our nation has produced, equal perhaps always in force and genius, and of late in elegance and accuracy, to those of any other country, very few have endeavoured to distinguish themselves by the publication of letters, except such as were written in the discharge of public trusts, and during the transaction of great affairs; which, though they afford precedents to the minister, and memorials to the historian, are of no use as examples of the familiar style, or models of private correspondence.

If it be inquired by foreigners, how this deficiency has happened in the literature of a country, where all indulge themselves with so little danger in speaking and writing; may we not without either bigotry or arrogance inform them, that it must be imputed to our contempt of trifles, and our due sense of the dignity of the public? We do not think it reasonable to fill the world with volumes from which nothing can be learned, nor expect that the employments of the busy, or the amusements of the gay, should give way to narratives of our private affairs, complaints of absence, expressions of fondness, or declarations of fidelity.

A slight perusal of the innumerable letters by which the wits of France have signalized their names, will prove that other nations need not be

discouraged from the like attempts by the consciousness of inability; for surely it is not very difficult to aggravate trifling misfortunes, to magnify familiar incidents, repeat adulatory professions, accumulate servile hyperboles, and produce all that can be found in the despicable remains of Voiture and Scarron.

Yet, as much of life must be passed in affairs considerable only by their frequent occurrence, and much of the pleasure which our condition allows, must be produced by giving elegance to trifles, it is necessary to learn how to become little without becoming mean, to maintain the necessary intercourse of civility, and fill up the vacuities of actions by agreeable appearances. It had therefore been of advantage, if such of our writers as have excelled in the art of decorating insignificance, had supplied us with a few sallies of innocent gäiety, effusions of honest tenderness, or exclamations of unimportant hurry.

Precept has generally been posterior to performance. The art of composing works of genius has never been taught but by the example of those who performed it by natural vigour of imagination, and rectitude of judgment. As we have few letters, we have likewise few criticisms upon the epistolary style. The observations with which Walsh has introduced his pages of inanity, are such as give him little claim to the rank assigned him by Dryden among the critics. "Letters," says he, "are intended as resemblances of conversation, and the chief excellencies of conversation are good-humour and good-breeding." This remark, equally valuable for its

novelty and propriety, he dilates and enforces with an appearance of complete acquiescence in his own discovery.

No man was ever in doubt about the moral qualities of a letter. It has been always known that he who endeavours to please must appear pleased, and he who would not provoke rudeness must not practise it. But the question among those who establish rules for an epistolary performance is, how gaiety or civility may be properly expressed; as among the critics in history it is not contested whether truth ought to be preserved, but by what mode of diction it is best adorned.

As letters are written on all subjects, in all states of mind, they cannot be properly reduced to settled rules, or described by any single characteristic; and we may safely disentangle our minds from critical embarrassments, by determining that a letter has no peculiarity but its form, and that nothing is to be refused admission, which would be proper in any other method of treating the same subject. The qualities of the epistolary style most frequently required, are ease and simplicity, an even flow of unlaboured diction, and an artless arrangement of obvious sentiments. But these directions are no sooner applied to use, than their scantiness and imperfection become evident. Letters are written to the great and to the mean, to the learned and the ignorant, at rest and in distress, in sport and in passion. Nothing can be more improper than ease and laxity of expression, when the importance of the subject impresses solicitude, or the dignity of the person exacts reverence.

That letters should be written with strict conformity to nature is true, because nothing but conformity to nature can make any composition beautiful or just. But it is natural to depart from familiarity of language upon occasions not familiar. Whatever elevates the sentiments will consequently raise the expression: whatever fills us with hope or terror, will produce some perturbation of images and some figurative distortions of phrase. Wherever we are studious to please, we are afraid of trusting our first thoughts, and endeavour to recommend our opinion by studied ornaments, accuracy of method, and elegance of style.

If the personages of the comic scene be allowed by Horace to raise their language in the transports of anger to the turgid vehemence of tragedy, the epistolary writer may likewise without censure comply with the varieties of his matter. If great events are to be related, he may, with all the solemnity of an historian, deduce them from their causes, connect them with their concomitants, and trace them to their consequences. If a disputed position is to be established, or a remote principle to be investigated, he may detail his reasonings with all the nicety of syllogistic method. If a menace is to be averted, or a benefit implored, he may, without any violation of the edicts of criticism, call every power of rhetoric to his assistance, and try every inlet at which love or pity enters the heart.

Letters that have no other end than the entertainment of the correspondents are more properly regulated by critical precepts, because the mat-

ter and style are equally arbitrary, and rules are more necessary, as there is a larger power of choice. In letters of this kind, some conceive art graceful, and others think negligence amiable; some model them by the sonnet, and will allow them no means of delighting but the soft lapse of calm mellifluence; others adjust them by the epigram, and expect pointed sentences and forcible periods. The one party considers exemption from faults as the height of excellence, the other looks upon neglect of excellence as the most disgusting fault; one avoids censure, the other aspires to praise; one is always in danger of insipidity, the other continually on the brink of affectation.

When the subject has no intrinsic dignity, it must necessarily owe its attractions to artificial embellishments, and may catch at all advantages which the art of writing can supply. He that, like Pliny, sends his friend a portion for his daughter, will, without Pliny's eloquence or address, find means of exciting gratitude, and securing acceptance; but he that has no present to make but a garland, a ribbon, or some petty curiosity, must endeavour to recommend it by his manner of giving it.

The purpose for which letters are written when no intelligence is communicated or business transacted, is to preserve in the minds of the absent either love or esteem; to excite love we must impart pleasure, and to raise esteem we must discover abilities. Pleasure will generally be given, as abilities are displayed by scenes of imagery, points of conceit, unexpected sallies,

and artful compliments. Trifles always require exuberance of ornament; the building which has no strength can be valued only for the grace of its decorations. The pebble must be polished with care, which hopes to be valued as a diamond; and words ought surely to be laboured when they are intended to stand for things.

RAMBLER.

POETRY DEBASED BY MEAN EXPRESSIONS.

——*Decipit*
Frons prima multos, rara mens intelligit
Quod interiore condidit cura angulo.

PHÆDRUS.

The tinsel glitter, and the specious mien,
Delude the most; few pry behind the scene.

IT has been observed by Boileau, that "a mean or common thought expressed in pompous diction, generally pleases more than a new or noble sentiment delivered in low and vulgar language; because the number is greater of those whom custom has enabled to judge of words, than whom study has qualified to examine things."

This solution might satisfy, if such only were offended with meanness of expression as are unable to distinguish propriety of thought, and to separate propositions or images, from the vehicles by which they are conveyed to the understanding. But this kind of disgust is by no

means confined to the ignorant or superficial; it operates uniformly and universally upon readers of all classes; every man, however profound or abstracted, perceives himself irresistibly alienated by low terms: they who profess the most zealous adherence to truth, are forced to admit that she owes part of her charms to her ornaments: and loses much of her power over the soul, when she appears disgraced by a dress uncouth or ill-adjusted.

We are all offended by low terms, but are not disgusted alike by the same compositions, because we do not all agree to censure the same terms as low. No word is naturally or intrinsically meaner than another; our opinion therefore of words, as of other things arbitrarily and capriciously established, depends wholly upon accident and custom. The cottager thinks those apartments splendid and spacious, which an inhabitant of palaces will despise for their inelegance; and to him who has passed most of his hours with the delicate and polite, many expressions will seem sordid, which another, equally acute, may hear without offence; but a mean term never fails to displease him to whom it appears mean, as poverty is certainly and invariably despised, though he who is poor in the eyes of some, may, by others, be envied for his wealth.

Words become low by the occasions to which they are applied, or the general character of them who use them: and the disgust which they produce arises from the revival of those images with which they are commonly united. Thus if

in the most solemn discourse, a phrase happens to occur which has been successfully employed in some ludicrous narrative, the gravest auditor finds it difficult to refrain from laughter, when they who are not prepossessed by the same accidental association, are utterly unable to guess the reason of his merriment. Words which convey ideas of dignity in one age, are banished from elegant writing or conversation in another, because they are in time debased by vulgar mouths, and can be no longer heard without the involuntary recollection of unpleasing images.

When Macbeth is confirming himself in the horrid purpose of stabbing his king, he breaks out amidst his emotions into a wish natural to a murderer:

——Come, thick night!
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes!
Nor Heav'n peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry, Hold! hold!

In this passage is exerted all the force of poetry; that force which calls new powers into being, which embodies sentiment, and animates matter; yet, perhaps, scarce any man now peruses it without some disturbance of his attention from the counteraction of the words to the ideas. What can be more dreadful than to implore the presence of night, invested, not in common obscurity, but in the smoke of hell? Yet the efficacy of this invocation is destroyed by the insertion of an epithet now seldom heard but in the stable, and *dun* night may come or go without any other notice than contempt.

If we start into raptures when some hero of the Iliad tells us that δόρυ μάνεται, his lance rages with eagerness to destroy; if we are alarmed at the terror of the soldiers commanded by Cæsar to hew down the sacred grove, who dreaded, says Lucan, lest the axe aimed at the oak should fly back upon the striker:

——*Si robora sacra ferirent,*
In sua credebant redituras membra secures,—

None dares with impious steel the grove to rend,
Lest on himself the destin'd stroke descend;

we cannot surely but sympathize with the horrors of a wretch about to murder his master, his friend, his benefactor, who suspects that the weapon will refuse its office, and start back from the breast which he is preparing to violate. Yet this sentiment is weakened by the name of an instrument used by butchers and cooks in the meanest employments; we do not immediately conceive that any crime of importance is to be committed with a *knife;* or who does not, at last from the long habit of connecting a knife with sordid offices, feel aversion rather than terror?

Macbeth proceeds to wish, in the madness of guilt, that the inspection of Heaven may be intercepted, and that he may, in the involutions of infernal darkness, escape the eyes of Providence. This is the utmost extravagance of determined wickedness; yet this is so debased by two unfortunate words, that while I endeavour to impress on my reader the energy of the sentiment, I can scarce check my risibility, when the ex-

pression forces itself upon my mind; for who, without some relaxation of his gravity, can hear of the avengers of guilt *peeping through a blanket.*

These imperfections of diction are less obvious to the reader, as he is less acquainted with common usages; they are therefore wholly imperceptible to a foreigner, who learns our language from books, and will strike a solitary academic less forcibly than a modish lady.

Among the numerous requisites that most concur to complete an author, few are of more importance than an early entrance into the living world. The seeds of knowledge may be planted in solitude, but must be cultivated in public. Argumentation may be taught in colleges, and theories formed in retirement; but the artifice of embellishment, and the powers of attraction, can be gained only by general converse.

An acquaintance with prevailing customs and fashionable elegance is necessary likewise for other purposes. The injury that grand imagery suffers from unsuitable language, personal merit may fear from rudeness and indelicacy. When the success of Æneas depended on the favour of the queen upon whose coasts he was driven, his celestial protectress thought him not sufficiently secured against rejection by his piety or bravery, but decorated him for the interview with preternatural beauty. Whoever desires, for his writings or himself, what none can reasonably contemn, the favour of mankind, must add grace to strength, and make his thoughts agreeable as well as useful. Many complain of neglect who never tried to attract regard. It cannot be ex-

pected that the patrons of science or virtue should be solicitous to discover excellencies, which they who possess them shade and disguise. Few have abilities so much needed by the rest of the world as to be caressed on their own terms, and he that will not condescend to recommend himself by external embellishments, must submit to the fate of just sentiments meanly expressed, and be ridiculed and forgotten before he is understood.

RAMBLER.

ANNINGAIT AND AJUT,

A GREENLAND HISTORY.

Pone me, pigris ubi nulla campis
Arbor æstivâ recreatur aurâ——
Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo,
Dulce loquentem.

HOR.

Place me where never summer breeze
Unbinds the glebe, or warms the trees;
Where ever-lowering clouds appear,
And angry Jove deforms th' inclement year;
Love and the nymph shall charm my toils,
The nymph, who sweetly speaks and sweetly smiles.

FRANCIS.

OF the happiness and misery of our present state, part arises from our sensations, and part from our opinions; part is distributed by nature and part is in a great measure apportioned by ourselves. Positive pleasure we cannot always obtain, and positive pain we often cannot remove.

No man can give to his own plantations the fragrance of the Indian groves; nor will any precepts of philosophy enable him to withdraw his attention from wounds or diseases. But the negative infelicity which proceeds, not from the pressure of sufferings, but the absence of enjoyments, will always yield to the remedies of reason.

One of the great arts of escaping superfluous uneasiness, is to free our minds from the habit of comparing our condition with that of others on whom the blessings of life are more bountifully bestowed, or with imaginary states of delight and security, perhaps unattainable by mortals. Few are placed in a situation so gloomy and distressful, as not to see every day beings yet more forlorn and miserable, from whom they may learn to rejoice in their own lot.

No inconvenience is less superable by art or diligence than the inclemency of climates, and therefore none affords more proper exercise for this philosophical abstraction. A native of England, pinched with the frosts of December, may lessen his affection for his own country by suffering his imagination to wander in the vales of Asia, and sport among the woods that are always green, and streams that always murmur; but if he turns his thoughts towards the polar regions, and considers the nations to whom a great portion of the year is darkness, and who are condemned to pass weeks and months amidst mountains of snow, he will soon recover his tranquillity, and while he stirs his fire, or throws his cloak about him, reflect how much he owes to Providence, that he is not placed in Greenland or Siberia.

The barrenness of the earth and the severity of the skies, in these dreary countries, are such as might be expected to confine the mind wholly to the contemplation of necessity and distress, so that the care of escaping death from cold and hunger should leave no room for those passions which, in lands of plenty, influence conduct or diversify characters; the summer should be spent only in providing for the winter, and the winter in longing for the summer.

Yet learned curiosity is known to have found its way into these abodes of poverty and gloom: Lapland and Iceland have their historians, their critics, and their poets; and love, that extends his dominion wherever humanity can be found, perhaps exerts the same power in the Greenlander's hut as in the palaces of eastern monarchs.

In one of the large caves to which the families of Greenland retire together, to pass the cold months, and which may be termed their villages or cities, a youth and maid, who came from different parts of the country, were so much distinguished for their beauty, that they were called by the rest of the inhabitants Anningait and Ajut, from a supposed resemblance to their ancestors of the same names, who had been transformed of old into the sun and moon.

Anningait for some time heard the praises of Ajut with little emotion, but at last, by frequent interviews, became sensible of her charms, and first made a discovery of his affection, by inviting her with her parents to a feast, where he placed before Ajut the tail of a whale. Ajut seemed not much delighted by this gallantry: yet

however, from that time, was observed rarely to appear but in a vest made of the skin of a white deer; she used frequently to renew the black dye upon her hands and forehead, to adorn her sleeves with coral and shells, and to braid her hair with great exactness.

The elegance of her dress, and the judicious disposition of her ornaments, had such an effect upon Anningait, that he could no longer be restrained from a declaration of his love. He therefore composed a poem in her praise, in which, among other heroic and tender sentiments, he protested, that "she was beautiful as the vernal willow, and fragrant as thyme upon the mountains; that her fingers were white as the teeth of the morse, and her smile grateful as the dissolution of the ice; that he would pursue her, though she should pass the snows of the midland cliffs, or seek shelter in the caves of the eastern cannibals; that he would tear her from the embraces of the genius of the rocks, snatch her from the paws of Amarock, and rescue her from the ravine of Hafgufa." He concluded with a wish, that "whoever shall attempt to hinder his union with Ajut might be buried without his bow, and that in the land of souls, his skull might serve for no other use than to catch the droppings of the starry lamps."

This ode being universally applauded, it was expected that Ajut would soon yield to such fervour and accomplishments: but Ajut, with the natural haughtiness of beauty, expected all the forms of courtship; and before she would confess herself conquered, the sun returned, the ice broke,

and the season of labour called all to their employments.

Anningait and Ajut for a time always went out in the same boat, and divided whatever was caught. Anningait, in the sight of his mistress, lost no opportunity of signalizing his courage; he attacked the seahorses on the ice, pursued the seals into the water, and leaped upon the back of the whale while he was yet struggling with the remains of life. Nor was his diligence less to accumulate all that could be necessary to make winter comfortable; he dried the roe of fishes and the flesh of seals; he entrapped deer and foxes, and dressed their skins to adorn his bride; he feasted her with eggs from the rocks, and strewed her tent with flowers.

It happened that a tempest drove the fish to a distant part of the coast before Anningait had completed his store; he therefore entreated Ajut that she would at last grant him her hand, and accompany him to that part of the country whither he was now summoned by necessity. Ajut thought him not yet entitled to such condescension, but proposed, as a trial of his constancy, that he should return at the end of summer to the cavern where their acquaintance commenced, and there expect the reward of his assiduities. "O virgin, beautiful as the sun shining on the water, consider," said Anningait, "what thou hast required. How easily may my return be precluded by a sudden frost or unexpected fogs! Then must the night be past without my Ajut. We live not, my fair, in those fabled countries which lying strangers so wantonly des-

cribe; where the whole year is divided into short days and nights; where the same habitation serves for summer and winter; where they raise houses in rows above the ground, dwell together from year to year, with flocks of tame animals grazing in the fields about them; can travel at any time from one place to another, through ways inclosed with trees, or over walls raised upon the inland waters; and direct their course through wide countries by the sight of green hills or scattered buildings. Even in summer, we have no means of crossing the mountains whose snows are never dissolved; nor can remove to any distant residence, but in our boats coasting the bays. Consider, Ajut, a few summer-days, and a few winter-nights, and the life of man is at an end. Night is the time of ease and festivity, of revels and gaiety: but what will be the flaming lamp, the delicious seal, or the soft oil, without the smile of Ajut?"

The eloquence of Anningait was vain; the maid continued inexorable, and they parted with ardent promises to meet again before the night of winter.

Anningait, however discomposed by the dilatory coyness of Ajut, was yet resolved to omit no tokens of amorous respect; and therefore presented her at his departure with the skins of seven white fawns, of five swans, and eleven seals, with three marble lamps, ten vessels of seal oil, and a large kettle of brass, which he had purchased from a ship, at the price of half a whale and two horns of sea-unicorns.

Ajut was so much affected by the fondness of

her lover, or so much overpowered by his magnificence, that she followed him to the sea-side; and, when she saw him enter the boat, wished aloud that he might return with plenty of skins and oil; that neither the mermaids might snatch him into the deeps, nor the spirits of the rocks confine him in their caverns.

She stood awhile to gaze upon the departing vessel, and then returning to her hut, silent and dejected laid aside, from that hour, her white deer-skin, suffered her hair to spread unbraided on her shoulders, and forbore to mix in the dances of the maidens. She endeavoured to divert her thoughts by continual application to feminine employments, gathered moss for the winter lamps, and dried grass to line the boots of Anningait. Of the skins which he had bestowed upon her, she made a fishing-coat, a small boat, and tent, all of exquisite manufacture; and, while she was thus busied, solaced her labours with a song, in which she prayed, "that her lover might have hands stronger than the paws of the bear, and feet swifter than the feet of the rein-deer; that his dart might never err, and that his boat might never leak; that he might never stumble on the ice, nor faint in the water; that the seal might rush on his harpoon, and the wounded whale might dash the waves in vain."

The large boats in which the Greenlanders transport their families, are always rowed by women; for a man will not debase himself by work which requires neither skill nor courage. Anningait was therefore exposed by idleness to the ravages of passion. He went thrice to the

stern of the boat, with an intent to leap into the water, and swim back to his mistress; but recollecting the misery which they must endure in the winter, without oil for the lamp or skins for the bed, he resolved to employ the weeks of absence in provision for a night of plenty and felicity. He then composed his emotions as he could, and expressed in wild numbers and uncouth images his hopes, his sorrows, and his fears. "O life!" says he "frail and uncertain! where shall wretched man find thy resemblance but in ice floating on the ocean? It towers on high, it sparkles from afar, while the storms drive and the waters beat it, the sun melts it above, and the rocks shatter it below. What art thou, deceitful pleasure! but a sudden blaze streaming from the north, which plays a moment on the eye, mocks the traveller with the hopes of light, and then vanishes for ever? What, love, art thou, but a whirlpool, which we approach without knowledge of our danger, drawn on by imperceptible degrees, till we have lost all power of resistance and escape? Till I fixed my eyes on the graces of Ajut, while I had not yet called her to the banquet, I was careless as the sleeping morse, I was merry as the singers in the stars. Why, Ajut, did I gaze upon thy graces? why, my fair, did I call thee to the banquet?—Yet, be faithful, my love, remember Anningait, and meet my return with the smile of virginity, I will chase the deer, I will subdue the whale, resistless as the frost of the darkness, and unwearied as the summer sun. In a few weeks I shall return prosperous and wealthy; then shall the roefish

and the porpoise feast thy kindred; the fox and hare shall cover thy couch; the tough hide of the seal shall shelter thee from cold; and the fat of the whale illuminate thy dwelling."

Anningait having with these sentiments consoled his grief, and animated his industry, found that they had now coasted the headland, and saw whales spouting at a distance. He therefore placed himself in his fishing-boat, called his associates to their several employments, plied his oar and harpoon with incredible courage and dexterity; and, by dividing his time between the chase and fishery, suspended the miseries of absence and suspicion.

Ajut, in the mean time, notwithstanding her neglected dress, happened, as she was drying some skins in the sun, to catch the eye of Norngsuk, on his return from hunting. Norngsuk was of birth truly illustrious. His mother had died in child-birth, and his father, the most expert fisher of Greenland, had perished by too close pursuit of the whale. His dignity was equalled by his riches; he was master of four men and two women's boats, had ninety tubs of oil in his winter habitation, and five-and-twenty seals buried in the snow against the season of darkness. When he saw the beauty of Ajut, he immediately threw over her the skin of a deer that he had taken, and soon after presented her with a branch of coral. Ajut refused his gifts, and determined to admit no lover in the place of Anningait.

Norngsuk, thus rejected, had recourse to stratagem. He knew that Ajut would consult an Angekkok, or diviner, concerning the fate of her

lover, and the felicity of her future life. He therefore applied himself to the most celebrated Angekkok of that part of the country, and, by a present of two seals and a marble kettle, obtained a promise that, when Ajut should consult him, he would declare that her lover was in the land of souls. Ajut, in a short time, brought him a coat made by herself, and inquired what events were to befall her; with assurances of a much larger reward at the return of Anningait, if the prediction should flatter her desires. The Angekkok knew the way to riches, and foretold that Anningait, having already caught two whales, would soon return home with a large boat laden with provisions.

This prognostication she was ordered to keep secret; and Norngsuk, depending upon his artifice, renewed his addresses with greater confidence; but, finding his suit still unsuccessful, applied himself to her parents with gifts and promises. The wealth of Greenland is too powerful for the virtue of a Greenlander; they forgot the merit and the presents of Anningait, and decreed Ajut to the embraces of Norngsuk. She entreated; she remonstrated; she wept, and raved; but, finding riches irresistible, fled away into the uplands, and lived in a cave upon such berries as she could gather, and the birds or hares which she had the fortune to ensnare, taking care, at an hour when she was not likely to be found, to view the sea every day, that her lover might not miss her at his return.

'At last she saw the great boat in which Anningait had departed, stealing slow and heavy-laden

along the coast. She ran with all the impatience of affection to catch her lover in her arms, and relate her constancy and sufferings. When the company reached the land, they informed her, that Anningait, after the fishery was ended, being unable to support the slow passage of the vessel of carriage, had set out before them in his fishing boat, and they expected at their arrival to have found him on shore.

Ajut, distracted at this intelligence, was about to fly into the hills, without knowing why, though she was now in the hands of her parents, who forced her back to their own hut, and endeavoured to comfort her: but when at last they retired to rest, Ajut went down to the beach; where, finding a fishing-boat, she entered it without hesitation, and, telling those who wondered at her rashness, that she was going in search of Anningait, rowed away with great swiftness, and was seen no more.

The fate of these lovers gave occasion to various fictions and conjectures. Some are of opinion that they were changed into stars; others imagine that Anningait was seized in his passage by the genius of the rocks; and that Ajut was transformed into a mermaid, and still continues to seek her lover in the deserts of the sea. But the general persuasion is that they are both in that part of the land of souls where the sun never sets, where oil is always fresh, and provisions always warm. The virgins sometimes throw a thimble and a needle into the bay from which the hapless maid departed; and when a Greenlander would praise any couple for virtuous affection, he declares that they love like Anningait and Ajut.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK III.

Hail, holy Light! offspring of heaven first-born!
Or of the Eternal co-eternal beam,
May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate!
Or hear'st thou rather, pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun,
Before the heavens thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite.
Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight,
Through utter and through middle darkness borne,
With other notes than to the Orphean lyre,
I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;
Taught by the heavenly muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to re-ascend,
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
And feel thy sovereign vital lamp; but thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,
Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,

Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,
That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget
Those other two equall'd with me in fate,
So were I equall'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris, and blind Mœonides,
And Tiresias, and Phineus, prophets old:
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid,
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
Seasons return; but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works, to me expunged and rased,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, celestial light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

Now had the Almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyrean where he sits
High throned above all height, bent down his eye.
His own works, and their works, at once to view:
About him all the sanctities of heaven
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received
Beatitude past utterance; on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son; on earth he first beheld

Our two first parents, yet the only two
Of mankind, in the happy garden placed,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,
In blissful solitude; he then survey'd
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
Coasting the wall of heaven on this side night
In the dun air sublime, and ready now
To stoop, with wearied wings, and willing feet,
On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd,
Firm land imbosom'd without firmament,
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
Him God beholding from his prospect high,
Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,
Thus to his only Son, foreseeing spake:
"Only-begotten Son, seest thou what rage,
Transports our adversary? whom no bounds,
Prescribed, no bars of hell, nor all the chains,
Heaped on him there, nor yet the main abyss,
Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems,
On desperate revenge, that shall redound,
Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way,
Not far off heaven, in the precincts of light,
Directly towards the new-created world,
And man there placed with purpose to essay,
If him by force he can destroy, or, worse,
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert;
For man will harken to his glozing lies,
And easily transgress the sole command,
Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall,
He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
All he could have; I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall,
Such I created all the ethereal powers

And spirits, both them who stood and them who fail'd;
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have given sincere,
Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love,
Where only what they needs must do appear'd,
Not what they would? what praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid?
When will and reason (reason also's choice)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
Made passive both, had served necessity,
Not me? They therefore, as to right belong'd
So were created, nor can justly accuse,
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
As if predestination overruled
Their will, disposed by absolute decree
Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less proved certain unforeknown,
So without least impulse or shadow of fate,
Or ought by me immutably foreseen,
They trespass, authors to themselves in all
Both what they judge, and what they choose; for so
I form'd them free: and free they must remain,
Till they inthral themselves; I else must change
Their nature, and revoke the high decree
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
Their freedom; they themselves ordained their fall.
The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
Self-tempted, self-depraved: man falls, deceived
By the other first: man therefore shall find grace,
The other none: in mercy and justice both,
Through heaven and earth, so shall my glory excel
But mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine."
Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
All heaven, and in the blessed spirits elect

Sense of new joy ineffable diffused.
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious: in him all his Father shone
Substantially express'd; and in his face
Divine compassion visibly appeared,
Love without end, and without measure grace,
Which uttering, thus he to his father spake:
"O father! gracious was that word which closed
Thy sovereign sentence, that man should find grace
For which both heaven and earth shall high extol
Thy praises, with the innumerable sound
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
Encompass'd shall resound thee ever blest:
For should man finally be lost, should man,
Thy creature late so loved, thy youngest son,
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
With his own folly? That be from thee far,
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
Of all things made, and judgest only right,
Or shall the adversary thus obtain
His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought;
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplished and to hell
Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
By him corrupted! or wilt thou thyself
Abolish thy creation and unmake,
For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
Be question'd and blasphemed without defence."
To whom the great Creator thus replied:
"O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
Son of my bosom! Son who art alone
My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,
All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
As my eternal purpose hath decreed:

Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will,
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
Freely vouchsafed; once more I will renew
His lapsed powers, though forfeit, and inthrall'd
By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
Upheld by me yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe;
By me upheld, that he may know how frail
His fall'n condition is, and to me owe
All his delivr'ance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,
Elect above the rest; so is my will:
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
The incensed Deity while offered grace
Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.
To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut
And I will place within them as a guide
My umpire conscience; whom it they will hear,
Light after light, well used, they shall attain,
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
This my long sufferance, and my day of grace,
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;
But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more,
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;
And none but such from mercy I exclude.
But yet all is not done; man disobeying,
Disloyal, breaks his fealty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of Heaven,
Affecting godhead, and, so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath nought left,
But to destruction sacred and devote,

He with his whole posterity, must die,
Die he or justice must; unless for him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
Say, heavenly Powers, where shall we find such love?
Which of ye will be mortal, to redeem
Man's mortal crime, and just the unjust to save?
Dwells in all heaven charity so dear?"
He ask'd, but all the heavenly quire stood mute,
And silence was in heaven: on man's behalf
Patron or intercessor none appear'd,
Much less that durst upon his own head draw
The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
And now without redemption all mankind
Must have been lost, adjudged to death and hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,
His dearest mediation thus renew'd:
"Father, thy word is pass'd man shall find grace;
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all
Comes unprevented, unimplored, unsought?
Happy for man, so coming; he her aid
Can never seek, once dead in sins, and lost;
Atonement for himself, or offering meet,
Indebted and undone, hath none to bring:
Behold me, then; me for him, life for life
I offer; on me let thine anger fall;
Account me man; I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly die
Well pleased; on me let Death wreak all his rage,
Under his gloomy power I shall not long
Lie vanquish'd; thou hast given me to possess
Life in myself for ever; by thee I live,

Though now to Death I yield, and am his due,
All that of me can die: yet, that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave,
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell –
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil;
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
I, through the ample air, in triumph high
Shall lead hell captive, maugre hell, and show
The powers of darkness bound. Thou, at the sight
Pleased, out of heaven shalt look down, and smile,
While, by thee raised, I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave:
Then, with the multitude of my redeem'd,
Shall enter heaven, long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assured
And reconcilement; wrath shall be no more.
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire."
His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience; as a sacrifice
Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will
Of his great Father. Admiration seized
All heaven, what this might mean, and whither tend,
Wondering; but soon the Almighty thus replied:
"O thou, in heaven and earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath! O thou,
My sole complacence! well thou know'st how dear
To me are all my works, nor man the least,
Though last created; that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
By losing thee awhile, the whole race lost.

Thou, therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
Their nature also to thy nature join;
And be thyself man among men on earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed
By wondrous birth; be thou in Adam's room
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee,
As from a second root, shall be restored
As many as are restored, without thee, none.
His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit,
Imputed, shall absolve them who renounce
Their own, both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for man, be judged and die,
And dying rise, and rising with him, raise
His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate,
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
So dearly to redeem, what hellish hate
So easily destroy'd, and still destroys
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
Because thou hast, though throned in highest bliss,
Equal to God, and equally enjoying,
God-like fruition, quitted all, to save
A world from utter loss, and hast been found
By merit more than birthright, Son of God,
Found worthiest to be so, by being good,
Far more than great or high; because in thee
Love hath abounded more than glory abounds,
Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy manhood also to this throne;
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign
Both God and man, Son both of God and man,

Anointed universal King ; all power
I give thee ; reign for ever, and assume
Thy merits ; under thee, as head supreme,
Thrones, princedoms, powers, dominions, I reduce :
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
In heaven, or earth, or under earth in hell.
When thou, attended gloriously from heaven,
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
The summoning archangels to proclaim
Thy dread tribunal : forthwith from all winds
The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all past ages, to the general doom
Shall hasten ; such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
Then, all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge
Bad men and angels ; they arraign'd, shall sink
Beneath thy sentence : hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New heaven and earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
And, after all their tribulations long,
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,
For regal sceptre then no more shall need ;
God shall be all in all. But, all ye gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this, dies ;
Adore the Son, and honour him as me."
No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but all
The multitude of angels, with a shout,
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices, uttering joy, heaven rung
With jubilee, and loud hosannas fill'd
The eternal regions : lowly reverent
Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground,
With solemn adoration, down they cast
Their crowns, inwove with amarant and gold—

Immortal amarant, a flower which once
In paradise, fast by the tree of life
Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence
To heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows,
And flowers aloft, shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliss through midst of heaven
Rolls ov'r Elysian flowers her amber stream;
With these, that never fade, the spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks, inwreathed with beams:
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
Impurpled with celestial roses, smiled.
Then crown'd again, their golden harps they took,
Harps ever tuned, that glitt'ring by their side
Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
Of charming symphony they introduce
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high:
No voice exempt, no voice but well could join
Melodious part, such concord is in heaven.
"Thee, Father," first they sung, "Omnipotent,
Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
Eternal King; thee, Author of all being,
Fountain of light, thyself invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness, where thou sitt'st
Throned inaccessible, but when thou shadest
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee, like a radiant shrine,
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear,
Yet dazzle heaven, that brightest seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes,
Thee," next they sang, "of all creation first,
Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
In whose conspicuous countenance, without cloud
Made visible, the Almighty Father shines,
Whom else no creature can behold: on thee
Impressed the effulgence of his glory abides;

Transfused on thee his ample Spirit rests.
The heaven of heavens, and all the powers therein,
By thee created; and by thee thrown down
The aspiring dominations: thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot-wheels, that shook
Heaven's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks
Thou drov'st of warring angels disarrayed.
Back from pursuit thy powers with loud acclaim
Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes:
Not so on man: him, through their malice fall'n,
Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity incline:
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purposed not to doom frail man,
So strictly, but much more to pity inclined,
He, to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice in thy face discerned,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
Second to thee, offer'd himself to die
For man's offence. O unexampled love!
Love no where to be found less than divine!
Hail son of God! Saviour of men! Thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my song
Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin."
Thus they in heaven, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
Meanwhile, upon the firm opacous globe
Of this round world, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferior orbs, enclosed
From Chaos, and th' inroad of darkness old
Satan alighted walks: a globe far off
It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent,
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of night

Starless, exposed, and over-threat'ning storms
Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky ;
Save on that side which, from the wall of heaven
Though distant far, some small reflection gains
Of glimmering air, less vex'd with tempest loud :
Here walk'd the fiend at large in spacious field.
As when a vulture, on Imaüs bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids,
On hills where flocks are fed, flies towards the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams ;
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
With sails and wind their cany waggons light :
So, on this windy sea of land, the fiend
Walked up and down alone, bent on his prey ;
Alone, for other creature in this place,
Living or lifeless, to be found was none ;
None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
Up hither, like aerial vapours, flew
Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
With vanity had filled the works of men ;
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
Or happiness in this or the other life :
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds ;
All the unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand,
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final dissolution, wander here :
Not in the neighbouring moon, as some have dream'd ;
Those argent fields more likely habitants,

Translated saints, or middle spirits, hold,
Betwixt the angelical and human kind.
Hither of ill-join'd sons and daughters born
First from the ancient world those giants came,
With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd:
The builders next of Babel on the plain
Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:
Others came single; he, who to be deem'd
A God, leap'd fondly into Ætna's flames,
Empedocles; and he who, to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
Cleombrotus; and many more too long,
Embryos and idiots, eremites and friars,
White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery.
Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in heaven;
And they, who, to be sure of Paradise,
Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised;
They pass the planets seven, and pass the fix'd,
And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs
The trepidation talk'd, and that first moved;
And now Saint Peter at heaven's wicket seems
To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
Of heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when, lo!
A violent cross wind from either coast
Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues awry
Into the devious air; then might ye see
Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, tost
And flutter'd into rags; then relics, beads,
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
The sport of winds: all these, upwhirl'd aloft,
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off,
Into a limbo large and broad, since call'd
The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown

Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod.
All this dark globe the fiend found as he pass'd,
And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam
Of dawning light turn'd thitherward in haste
His travell'd steps: far distant he descries,
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of heaven, a structure high;
At top whereof, but far more rich, appear'd
The work as of a kingly palace-gate,
With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Embellish'd; thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on earth
By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz,
Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cried, "This is the gate of heaven."
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to heaven sometimes
Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth, sailing arrived,
Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The fiend by easy ascent or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss:
Direct against which open'd from beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to the earth, a passage wide,
Wider by far than that of after-times
Over mount Sion, and though that were large,
Over the Promised Land, to God so dear;
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,

On high behests his angels to and fro
Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard
From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood,
To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Egypt and the Arabian shore;
So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence, now on the lower stair,
That scaled by steps of gold to heaven-gate,
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a scout,
Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen, or some renown'd metropolis,
With glistering spires and pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams;
Such wonder seized, though after heaven seen,
The spirit malign, but much more envy seized,
At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
Round he surveys (and well might where he stood
So high above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade), from eastern point
Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas,
Beyond the horizon; then from pole to pole
He views in breadth, and without longer pause
Downright into the world's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air his oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;
Or other worlds they seem'd or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,

Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales,
Thrice happy isles; but who dwelt happy there
He stay'd not to inquire: above them all
The golden sun, in splendour likest heaven,
Allured his eye; thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament (but up or down,
By centre or eccentric, hard to tell,
Or longitude), where the great luminary,
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses light from far: they, as they move
Their starry dance in numbers that compute
Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp
Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
The universe, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen,
Shoots invisible virtue ev'n to the deep;
So wondrously was set his station bright.
There lands the fiend, a spot like which perhaps
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
Through his glazed optic tube yet never saw.
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compared with aught on earth, metal or stone;
Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;
If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear:
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides
Imagined rather oft than elsewhere seen;
That stone, or like to that, which here below
Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
In vain, though by their powerful art they bind
Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,

Drain'd through a limbec to his native form.
What wonder then if fields and regions here
Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch
The arch-chymic sun, so far from us remote,
Produces, with terrestrial humour mix'd,
Here in the dark so many precious things
Of colour glorious, and effect so rare ?
Here matter new to gaze the devil met
Undazzled ; far and wide his eye commands ;
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
But all sun-shine ; as when his beams at noon
Culminate from the equator, as they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body opaque can fall ; and the air,
No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray
To object distant far, whereby he soon
Saw within ken a glorious angel stand,
The same whom John saw also in the sun :
His back was turn'd but not his brightness hid ;
Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar
Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
Illustrious on his shoulders, fledge with wings,
Lay waving round ; on some great charge employ'd
He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope
To find who might direct his wandering flight
To Paradise, the happy seat of man,
His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
But first he casts to change his proper shape,
Which else might work him danger or delay :
And now a stripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face,
Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb
Suitable grace diffused, so well he feign'd
Under a coronet his flowing hair

In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore,
Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold;
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand.
He drew not nigh unheard; the angel bright,
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
Admonish'd by his ear, and straight was known
The archangel Uriel, one of the seven
Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes
That run through all the heavens, or down to the earth
Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts:
"Uriel, for thou of those seven spirits that stand
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
The first art wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest heaven to bring,
Where all his sons thy embassy attend;
And here art likeliest by supreme decree
Like honour to obtain, and as his eye
To visit oft this new creation round;
Unspeakable desire to see, and know
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly man,
His chief delight and favour, him for whom
All these his works so wondrous he ordain'd
Hath brought me from the quires of cherubin
Alone thus wandering. Brightest seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath man
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell;
That I may find him, and with secret gaze,
Or open admiration, him behold,
On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd
That both in him and all things, as is meet,
The universal Maker we may praise,

Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes
To deepest hell, and, to repair that loss,
Created this new happy race of men
To serve him better: wise are all his ways."
So spake the false dissembler unperceived;
For neither man nor angel can discern
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through heaven and earth:
And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems; which now for once beguiled
Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held
The sharpest-sighted spirit of all in heaven;
Who to the fraudulent impostor foul,
In his uprightness, answer thus return'd.
"Fair angel, thy desire, which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify
The great Work-master, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise.
The more it seems, excess, that led thee hither
From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps,
Contented with report, hear only in heaven:
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight;
But what created mind can comprehend
Their number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
I saw, when at his word the formless mass,
This world's material mould, came to a heap:
Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar
Stood ruled, stood vast infinitude confined;
Till at his second bidding darkness fled,

Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:
Swift to their several quarters hasted then
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire;
And this ethereal quintessence of heaven
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each his course;
The rest in circuit walls this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
That place is earth, the seat of man; that light
His day, which else, as the other hemisphere,
Night would invade; but there the neighbouring moon
(So call that opposite fair star) her aid
Timely interposes, and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid heaven,
With borrow'd light her countenance triform
Hence fills and empties to enlighten the earth,
And in her pale dominion checks the night.
That spot to which I point is Paradise,
Adam's abode; those lofty shades, his bower.
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires."
Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan, bowing low,
As to superior spirits is wont in heaven,
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave, and towards the coast of earth beneath,
Down from the ecliptic, sped with hoped success,
Throws his steep flight in many an aëry wheel,
Nor stay'd till on Niphates' top he lights.

MILTON.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

CANTO IV.

I.

I STOOD in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;
A palace and a prison on each hand:
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand:
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles!

II.

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers:
And such she was;—her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increased.

III.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier;
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear:
Those days are gone—but Beauty still is here.
States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy!

IV.

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond
Above the Dogeless city's vanish'd sway;
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, can not be swept or worn away—
The keystones of the arch! though all were o'er,
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

V.

The beings of the mind are not of clay;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence: that which Fate
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied,
First exiles, then replaces what we hate;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

Such is the refuge of our youth and age,
The first from Hope, the last from Vacancy;
And this worn feeling peoples many a page,
And, may be, that which grows beneath mine eye:
Yet there are things whose strong reality
Outshines our fairy-land; in shape and hues
More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
And the strange constellations which the Muse
O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse:

VII.

I saw or dream'd of such,—but let them go,—
They came like truth, and disappear'd like dreams;
And whatsoe'er they were—are now but so:
I could replace them if I would; still teems
My mind with many a form which aptly seems
Such as I sought for, and at moments found;
Let these too go—for waking Reason deems
Such over-weening phantasies unsound,
And other voices speak, and other sights surround.

VIII.

I've taught me other tongues—and in strange eyes
Have made me not a stranger; to the mind
Which is itself, no changes bring surprise;
Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find
A country with—ay, or without mankind;
Yet was I born where men are proud to be,
Not without cause; and should I leave behind
The inviolate island of the sage and free,
And seek me out a home by a remoter sea,

IX.

Perhaps I loved it well: and should I lay
My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
My spirit shall resume it—if we may
Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine
My hopes of being remember'd in my line
With my land's language; if too fond and far
These aspirations in their scope incline,—
If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,
Of hasty growth and blight, and dull Oblivion bar

X.

My name from out the temple where the dead
Are honour'd by the nations—let it be—
And light the laurels on a loftier head!
And be the Spartan's epitaph on me—
"Sparta hath many a worthier son than he."
Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need;
The thorns which I have reap'd are of the tree
I planted,—they have torn me,—and I bleed:
I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed

XI.

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord;
And annual marriage now no more renew'd,
The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
Neglected garment of her widowhood!
St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood
Stand, but in mockery of his wither'd power,
Over the proud Place where an Emperor sued,
And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour
When Venice was a queen with an unequall'd dower.

XII.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns—
An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt;
Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains
Clank over sceptred cities; nations melt
From power's high pinnacle, when they have felt
The sunshine for a while, and downward go
Like lauwine loosen'd from the mountain's belt;
Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo!
Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe.

XIII.

Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of brass,
Their gilded collars glittering in the sun;
But is not Doria's menace come to pass?
Are they not *bridled!*—Venice, lost and won,
Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,
Sinks, like a sea-weed, into whence she rose!
Better be whelm'd beneath the waves, and shun,
Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,
From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

XIV.

In youth she was all glory,—a new Tyre,—
Her very by-word sprung from victory,
The "Planter of the Lion," which through fire
And blood she bore o'er subject earth and sea;
Though making many slaves, herself still free,
And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite;
Witness Troy's rival, Candia! Vouch it, ye
Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's fight!
For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

XV.

Statues of glass—all shiver'd—the long file
Of her dead Doges are declined to dust;
But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile
Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust;
Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,
Have yielded to the stranger: empty halls,
Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must
Too oft remind her who and what enthrals,
Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice' lovely walls.

XVI.

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of war,
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,
Her voice their only ransom from afar;
See! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car
Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops, the reins
Fall from his hands—his idle scimitar
Starts from its belt—he rends his captive's chains,
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his strains.

XVII.

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine,
Where all thy proud historic deeds forget,
Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,
Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot
Which ties thee to thy tyrants! and thy lot
Is shameful to the nations,—most of all,
Albion! to thee: the Ocean queen should not
Abandon Ocean's children: in the fall
Of Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

XVIII.

I loved her from my boyhood—she to me
Was as a fairy city of the heart,
Rising like water-columns from the sea,
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;
And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakspeare's art,
Had stamp'd her image in me, and even so,
Although I found her thus, we did not part,
Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,
Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

XIX.

I can repeople with the past—and of
The present there is still for eye and thought,
And meditation chasten'd down, enough;
And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought;
And of the happiest moments which were wrought
Within the web of my existence, some
From thee, fair Venice! have their colours caught:
There are some feelings Time can not benumb,
Nor Torture shake, or mine would now be cold and dumb.

But from their nature will the tannen grow
Loftiest on loftiest and least shelter'd rocks,
Rooted in barrenness, where nought below
Of soil supports them 'gainst the Alpine shocks
Of eddying storms; yet springs the trunk, and mocks
The howling tempest, till its height and frame
Are worthy of the mountains from whose blocks
Of bleak, gray granite, into life it came,
And grew a giant tree:—the mind may grow the same.

XXI.

Existence may be borne, and the deep root
Of life and sufferance make its firm abode
In bare and desolated bosoms; mute
The camel labours with the heaviest load,
And the wolf dies in silence,—not bestow'd
In vain should such example be; if they,
Things of ignoble or of savage mood,
Endure and shrink not, we of nobler clay
May temper it to bear,—it is but for a day.

XXII.

All suffering doth destroy, or is destroy'd,
Even by the sufferer; and, in each event,
Ends:—Some, with hope replenish'd and rebuoy'd
Return to whence they came—with like intent,
And weave their web again; some, bow'd and bent,
Wax gray and ghastly, withering ere their time,
And perish with the reed on which they leant;
Some seek devotion, toil, war, good or crime,
According as their souls were form'd to sink or climb.

XXIII.

But ever and anon of griefs subdued
There comes a token like a scorpion's sting,
Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued;
And slight withal may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever: it may be a sound—
A tone of music—summer's eve—or spring—
A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound,
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound;

XXIV.

And how and why we know not, nor can trace
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,
But feel the shock renew'd, nor can efface
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind,
Which out of things familiar, undesign'd,
When least we deem of such, calls up to view
The spectress whom no exorcism can bind,
The cold—the changed—perchance the dead—anew,
The mourn'd, the loved, the lost—too many!—yet how few!

XXV.

But my soul wanders; I demand it back
To meditate amongst decay, and stand
A ruin amidst ruins; there to track
Fall'n states and buried greatness, o'er a land
Which *was* the mightiest in its old command,
And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be
The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand,
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,
The beautiful, the brave—the lords of earth and sea,

XXVI.

The commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome!
And even since, and now, fair Italy!
Thou art the garden of the world, the home
Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree;
Even in thy desert, what is like to thee?
Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
More rich than other climes' fertility;
Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced
With an immaculate charm which can not be defaced,

XXVII.

The moon is up, and yet it is not night—
Sunset divides the sky with her—a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is free
From clouds, but of all colours seems to be
Melted to one vast Iris of the west,
Where the day joins the past Eternity;
While on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
Floats through the azure air—an island of the blest.

XXVIII.

A single star is at her side, and reigns
With her o'er half the lovely heaven; but still
Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains
Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,
As Day and Night contending were, until
Nature reclaim'd her order;—gently flows
The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil
The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd within it glows,

XXIX.

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which, from afar,
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
From the rich sunset to the rising star,
Their magical variety diffuse:
And now they change; a paler shadow strews
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new colour as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest, till—'tis gone—and all is gray.

XXX.

There is a tomb in Arqua;—rear'd in air,
Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose
The bones of Laura's lover: here repair
Many familiar with his well-sung woes;
The pilgrims of his genius. He arose
To raise a language, and his land reclaim
From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes:
Watering the tree which bears his lady's name
With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

XXXI.

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died;
The mountain-village where his latter days
Went down the vale of years; and 'tis their pride—
An honest pride—and let it be their praise,
To offer to the passing stranger's gaze
His mansion and his sepulchre; both plain
And venerably simple, such as raise
A feeling more accordant with his strain
Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental fane.

XXXII.

And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt
Is one of that complexion which seems made
For those who their mortality have felt,
And sought a refuge from their hopes decay'd
In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,
Which shows a distant prospect far away
Of busy cities, now in vain display'd,
For they can lure no further; and the ray
Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

XXXIII.

Developing the mountains, leaves and flowers,
And shining in the brawling brook, whereby,
Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours
With a calm languor, which, though to the eye
Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.
If from society we learn to live,
'Tis solitude should teach us how to die;
It hath no flatterers; vanity can give
No hollow aid; alone—man with his God must strive;

XXXIV.

Or, it may be, with demons, who impair
The strength of better thoughts, and seek their prey
In melancholy bosoms, such as were
Of moody texture from their earliest day,
And loved to dwell in darkness and dismay,
Deeming themselves predestined to a doom
Which is not of the pangs that pass away;
Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb,
The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom.

XXXV.

Ferrara! in thy wide and grass-grown streets,
Whose symmetry was not for solitude,
There seems as 'twere a curse upon the seats
Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood
Of Este, which for many an age made good
Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore
Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood
Of petty power impell'd, of those who wore
The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn before.

XXXVI.

And Tasso is their glory and their shame.
Hark to his strain! and then survey his cell!
And see how dearly earn'd Torquato's fame,
And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell:
The miserable despot could not quell
The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend
With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell
Where he had plunged it. Glory without end
Scatter'd the clouds away—and on that name attend

XXXVII.

The tears and praises of all time; while thine
Would rot in its oblivion—in the sink
Of worthless dust, which from thy boasted line
Is shaken into nothing; but the link
Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think
Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn—
Alfonso! how thy ducal pageants shrink
From thee! if in another station born,
Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou mad'st to mourn:

XXXVIII.

Thou! form'd to eat, and be despised, and die,
Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou
Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty:
He! with a glory round his furrow'd brow,
Which emanated then, and dazzles now,
In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire,
And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow
No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,
That whetstone of the teeth—monotony in wire!

XXXIX.

Peace to Torquato's injured shade! 'twas his
In life and death to be the mark where Wrong
Aim'd with her poison'd arrows ; but to miss.
Oh, victor unsurpass'd in modern song!
Each year brings forth its millions ; but how long
The tide of generations shall roll on,
And not the whole combined and countless throng
Compose a mind like thine though all in one
Condensed their scatter'd rays, they would not form a sun.

XL.

Great as thou art, yet parallel'd by those,
Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,
The Bards of Hell and Chivalry : first rose
The Tuscan father's comedy divine ;
Then, not unequal to the Florentine,
The southern Scott, the minstrel who call'd forth
A new creation with his magic line,
And, like the Ariosto of the North,
Sang Ladye-love and war, romance and knightly worth.

XLI.

The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust
The iron crown of laurel's mimic'd leaves ;
Nor was the ominous element unjust,
For the true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves
Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves,
And the false semblance but disgraced his brow ;
Yet still, if fondly Superstition grieves,
Know, that the lightning sanctifies below
Whate'er it strikes ;—yon head is doubly sacred now.

XLII.

Italia! oh Italia! thou who hast
The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and past,
On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd by shame,
And annals graved in characters of flame.
Oh, God! that thou wert in thy nakedness
Less lovely or more powerful, and couldst claim
Thy right, and awe the robbers back, who press
To shed thy blood, and drink the tears of thy distress;

XLIII.

Then might'st thou more appal; or, less desired,
Be homely and be peaceful, undeplored
For thy destructive charms; then, still untired,
Would not be seen the armed torrents pour'd
Down the deep Alps; nor would the hostile horde
Of many-nation'd spoilers from the Po
Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's sword
Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,
Victor or vanquish'd thou, the slave of friend or foe.

XLIV.

Wandering in youth, I traced the path of him
The Roman friend of Rome's least-mortal mind,
The friend of Tully; as my bark did skim
The bright blue waters with a fanning wind,
Came Megara before me, and behind
Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,
Corinth on the left; I lay reclined
Along the prow, and saw all these unite
In ruin, even as he had seen the desolate sight;

XLV.

For Time hath not rebuilt them, but uprear'd
Barbaric dwellings on their shatter'd site,
Which only make more mourn'd and more endear'd
The few last rays of their far-scatter'd light,
And the crush'd relics of their vanish'd might.
The Roman saw these tombs in his own age,
These sepulchres of cities, which excite
Sad wonder, and his yet surviving page
The moral lesson bears, drawn from such pilgrimage.

XLVI.

That page is now before me, and on mine
His country's ruin added to the mass
Of perish'd states, he mourn'd in their decline,
And I in desolation: all that *was*
Of then destruction *is;* and now, alas!
Rome—Rome imperial, bows her to the storm,
In the same dust and blackness, and we pass
The skeleton of her Titanic form,
Wrecks of another world, whose ashes still are warm.

XLVII.

Yet, Italy! through every other land
Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to side
Mother of Arts! as once of arms; thy hand
Was then our guardian, and is still our guide;
Parent of our Religion! whom the wide
Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven!
Europe, repentant of her parricide,
Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,
Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

XLVII.

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,
Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps
A softer feeling for her fairy halls.
Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
Her corn, and wine, and oil, and Plenty leaps
To laughing life, with her redundant horn.
Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps
Was modern Luxury of Commerce born,
And buried Learning rose, redeem'd to a new morn.

XLIX.

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone, and fills
The air around with beauty; we inhale
The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils
Part of its immortality; the veil
Of heaven is half undrawn: within the pale
We stand, and in that form and face behold
What Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail;
And to the fond idolaters of old
Envy the inmate flash which such a soul could mould:

L.

We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
Reels with its fulness; there—for ever there—
Chain'd to the chariot of triumphal Art,
We stand as captives, and would not depart,
Away!—there need no words, nor terms precise
The paltry jargon of the marble mart,
Where Pedantry gulls Folly—we have eyes:
Blood—pulse—and breast, confirm the Dardan Shepherd's prize

Appear'dst thou not to Paris in this guise?
Or to more deeply blest Anchises? or,
In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies
Before thee thy own vanquished Lord of War?
And gazing in thy face as toward a star,
Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,
Feeding on thy sweet cheek; while thy lips are
With lava kisses melting while they burn,
Shower'd on his eyelids, brow, and mouth, as from an

LII.

Glowing, and circumfused in speechless love,
Their full divinity inadequate
That feeling to express, or to improve,
The gods became as mortals, and man's fate
Has moments like their brightest; but the weight
Of earth recoils upon us;—let it go!
We can recall such visions, and create,
From what has been, or might be, things which grow
Into thy statue's form, and look like gods below.

LIII.

I leave to learned fingers, and wise hands,
The artist and his ape, to teach and tell,
How well his connoisseurship understands
The graceful bend, and the voluptuous swell:
Let these describe the undescribable:
I would not their vile breath should crisp the stream
Wherein that image shall for ever dwell;
The unruffled mirror of the loveliest dream
That ever left the sky on the deep soul to beam.

LIV.

In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie
Ashes which make it holier, dust which is
Even in itself an immortality,
Though there were nothing save the past, and this,
The particle of those sublimities
Which have relapsed to chaos:—here repose
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his,
The starry Galileo, with his woes;
Here Machiavelli's earth return'd to whence it rose.

LV.

These are four minds, which, like the elements,
Might furnish forth creation:—Italy!
Time, which hath wrong'd thee with ten thousand rents
Of thine imperial garment, shall deny,
And hath denied, to every other sky,
Spirits which soar from ruin:—thy decay
Is still impregnate with divinity,
Which gilds it with revivifying ray;
Such as the great of yore, Canova is to-day.

LVI.

But where repose the all Etruscan three—
Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,
The Bard of Prose, creative spirit! he
Of the Hundred Tales of love—where did they lay
Their bones, distinguish'd from our common clay
In death as life? Are they resolved to dust,
And have their country's marbles nought to say?
Could not her quarries furnish forth one bust?
Did they not to her breast their filial earth entrust?

LVII.

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar,
Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore;
Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,
Proscribed the bard, whose name for evermore
Their children's children would in vain adore
With the remorse of ages; and the crown
Which Petrarch's laureate brow supremely wore,
Upon a far and foreign soil had grown,
His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled—not thine own.

LVIII.

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeath'd
His dust,—and lies it not her Great among,
With many a sweet and solemn requiem breathed
O'er him who form'd the Tuscan's siren tongue?
That music in itself, whose sounds are song,
The poetry of speech? No;—even his tomb
Uptorn, must bear the hyæna bigot's wrong,
No more amidst the meaner dead find room,
Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told for *whom!*

LIX.

And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust;
Yet for this want more noted, as of yore
The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust,
Did but of Rome's best Son remind her more:
Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,
Fortress of falling empire! honour'd sleeps
The immortal exile;—Arqua, too, her store
Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps,
While Florence vainly begs her banish'd dead and weeps.

LX.

What is her pyramid of precious stones?
Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues
Of gem and marble, to encrust the bones
Of Merchant-dukes? the momentary dews
Which, sparkling to the twilight stars infuse
Freshness in the green turf that wraps the dead,
Whose names are mausoleums of the Muse,
Are gently prest with far more reverent tread
Than ever paced the slab which paves the princely head.

LXI.

There be more things to greet the heart and eyes
In Arno's dome of Art's most princely shrine,
Where Sculpture with her rainbow sister vies;
There be more Titians yet—but not for mine;
For I have been accustom'd to entwine
My thoughts with Nature rather in the fields,
Than Art in galleries: though a work divine
Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it yields
Less than it feels, because the weapon which it wields,

LXII.

Is of another temper, and I roam
By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles
Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home;
For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles
Come back before me, as his skill beguiles
The host between the mountains and the shore,
Where Courage falls in her despairing files,
And torrents, swoll'n to rivers with their gore,
Reek through the sultry plain, with legions scattered o'er,

LXIII.

Like to a forest fell'd by mountain winds ;
And such the storm of battle on this day,
And such the frenzy, whose convulsion blinds
To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,
An earthquake reel'd unheededly away !
None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,
And yawning forth a grave for those who lay
Upon their bucklers for a winding sheet ;
Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations meet !

LXIV.

The Earth to them was as a rolling bark
Which bore them to Eternity ; they saw
The Ocean round, but had no time to mark
The motions of their vessel ; Nature's law,
In them suspended, reck'd not of the awe
Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the birds
Plunge in the clouds for refuge and withdraw
From their down-toppling nests ; and bellowing herds
Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath no words.

LXV.

Far other scene is Thrasimeme now ;
Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain
Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough ;
Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain
Lay where their roots are ; but a brook hath ta'en—
A little rill of scanty stream and bed—
A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain ;
And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead
Made the earth wet, and turn'd the unwilling waters red.

LXVI.

But thou, Clitumnus! in thy sweetest wave
Of the most living crystal that was e'er
The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave
Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear
Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer
Grazes; the purest god of gentle waters!
And most serene of aspect, and most clear;
Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters—
A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters!

LXVII.

And on thy happy shore a Temple still,
Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,
Upon a mild declivity of hill,
Its memory of thee; beneath it sweeps
Thy current's calmness; oft from out it leaps
The finny darter with the glittering scales,
Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps;
While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily sails
Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling tales.

LXVIII.

Pass not unblest the Genius of the place!
If through the air a zephyr more serene
Win to the brow, 'tis his; and if ye trace
Along his margin a more eloquent green,
If on the heart the freshness of the scene
Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust
Of weary life a moment lave it clean
With Nature's baptism,—'tis to him ye must
Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

LXIX.

The roar of waters!—from the headlong height
Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice;
The fall of waters! rapid as the light
The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss;
The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,
And boil in endless torture; while the sweat
Of their great agony, wrung out from this
Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet
That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

LXX.

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again
Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,
With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,
Is an eternal April to the ground,
Making it all one emerald:—how profound
The gulf! and how the giant element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,
Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent

LXXI.

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows
More like the fountain of an infant sea
Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes
Of a new world, than only thus to be
Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,
With many windings, through the vale:—Look back!
Lo! where it comes like an eternity,
As if to sweep down all things in its track,
Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract,

LXXII.

Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,
From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,
An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,
Like Hope, upon a death-bed, and, unworn
Its steady dyes, while all around is torn
By the distracted waters, bears serene
Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn:
Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,
Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

LXXIII.

Once more upon the woody Apennine,
The infant Alps, which—had I not before
Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine
Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar
The thundering lauwine—might be worshipp'd more:
But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear
Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar
Glacier of bleak Mont Blanc both far and near,
And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

LXXIV.

Th' Acroceraunian mountains of old name;
And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly
Like spirits of the spot, as 'twere for fame,
For still they soar'd unutterably high:
I've look'd on Ida with a Trojan's eye;
Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made
These hills seem things of lesser dignity,
All, save the lone Soracte's height, display'd
Not *now* in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid

LXXV.

For our remembrance, and from out the plain
Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,
And on the curl hangs pausing: not in vain
May he, who will, his recollections rake,
And quote in classic raptures, and awake
The hills with Latian echoes; I abhorr'd
Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word
In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record

LXXVI.

Aught that recalls the daily drug which turn'd
My sickening memory; and, though Time hath taught
My mind to meditate what then it learn'd,
Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought
By the impatience of my early thought,
That, with the freshness wearing out before
My mind could relish what it might have sought,
If free to choose, I cannot now restore
Its health; but what it then detested, still abhor.

LXXVII.

Then farewell, Horace; whom I hated so,
Not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse
To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
To comprehend, but never love thy verse,
Although no deeper Moralist rehearse
Our little life, nor Bard prescribe his art,
Nor livelier Satirist the conscience pierce,
Awakening without wounding the touch'd heart,
Yet fare thee well—upon Soracte's ridge we part.

LXXVIII.

Oh Rome! my country! city of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples—Ye
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

LXXIX.

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
An empty urn within her wither'd hands,
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago;
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now;
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

LXXX.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, and Fire,
Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride;
She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,
Where the car climb'd the capitol; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:—
Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
And say, "here was, or is," where all is doubly night?

LXXXI.

The double night of ages, and of her,
Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and wrap
All round us; we but feel our way to err:
The ocean hath his chart, the stars their map,
And knowledge spreads them on her ample lap;
But Rome is as the desert, where we steer
Stumbling o'er recollections; now we clap
Our hands, and cry "Eureka!" it is clear—
When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

LXXXII.

Alas! the lofty city! and alas!
The trebly hundred triumphs! and the day
When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass
The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away!
Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
And Livy's pictured page!—but these shall be
Her resurrection; all beside—decay.
Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see
That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free!

LXXXIII.

Oh thou, whose chariot roll'd on Fortune's wheel,
Triumphant Sylla! Thou, who didst subdue
Thy country's foes ere thou wouldst pause to feel
The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap the due
Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew
O'er prostrate Asia;—thou, who with thy frown
Annihilated senates—Roman, too,
With all thy vices, for thou didst lay down
With an atoning smile a more than earthly crown—

LXXXIV.

The dictatorial wreath,—couldst thou divine
To what would one day dwindle that which made
Thee more than mortal ? and that so supine
By aught than Romans Rome should thus be laid ?
She who was named Eternal, and array'd
Her warriors but to conquer—she who veil'd
Earth with her haughty shadow, and display'd,
Until the o'er-canopied horizon fail'd
Her rushing wings—Oh ! she who was Almighty hail'd !

LXXXV.

Sylla was first of victors ; but our own
The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell ; he
Too swept off senates while he hew'd the throne
Down to a block—immortal rebel ! See
What crimes it costs to be a moment free
And famous through all ages ! but beneath
His fate the moral lucks of destiny ;
His day of double victory and death
Beheld him win two realms, and, happier, yield his breath.

LXXXVI.

The third of the same moon whose former course
Had all but crown'd him, on the selfsame day
Deposed him gently from his throne of force,
And laid him with the earth's preceding clay.
And show'd not Fortune thus how fame and sway,
And all we deem delightful, and consume
Our souls to compass through each arduous way,
Are in her eyes less happy than the tomb ?
Were they but so in man's how different were his doom !

LXXXVII.

And thou, dread statue! yet existent in
The austerest form of naked majesty,
Thou who beheldest, 'mid the assassins' din,
At thy bathed base the bloody Cæsar lie,
Folding his robe in dying dignity,
An offering to thine altar from the queen
Of gods and men, great Nemesis! did he die,
And thou, too, perish, Pompey? have ye been
Victors of countless kings, or puppets of a scene?

LXXXVIII.

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse of Rome!
She-wolf! whose brazen-imaged dugs impart
The milk of conquest yet within the dome
Where, as a monument of antique art,
Thou standest:—Mother of the mighty heart,
Which the great founder suck'd from thy wild teat,
Scorch'd by the Roman Jove's ethereal dart,
And thy limbs black with lightning—dost thou yet
Guard thine immortal cubs, nor thy fond charge forget?

LXXXIX.

Thou dost;—but all thy foster-babes are dead—
The men of iron; and the world hath reap'd
Cities from out their sepulchres: men bled
In imitation of the things they fear'd,
And fought and conquer'd, and the same course steer'd,
At apish distance; but as yet none have,
Nor could, the same supremacy have near'd,
Save one vain man, who is not in the grave,
But, vanquish'd by himself, to his own slaves a slave—

XC.

The fool of false dominion—and a kind
Of bastard Cæsar, following him of old
With steps unequal ; for the Roman's mind
Was modell'd in a less terrestrial mould.
With passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold,
And an immortal instinct which redeem'd
The frailties of a heart, so soft, yet bold.
Alcides with the distaff now he seem'd
At Cleopatra's feet,—and now himself he beam'd,

XCI.

And came—and saw—and conquer'd ! But the man
Who would have tamed his eagles down to flee,
Like a train'd falcon, in the Gallic van,
Which he, in sooth, long led to victory,
With a deaf heart which never seem'd to be
A listener to itself, was strangely framed ;
With but one weakest weakness—vanity,
Coquettish in ambition—still he aim'd—
At what ? can he avouch—or answer what he claim'd ?

XCII.

And would be all or nothing—nor could wait
For the sure grave to level him ; few years
Had fix'd him with the Cæsars in his fate,
On whom we tread : For *this* the conqueror rears
The arch of triumph ! and for this the tears
And blood of earth flow on as they have flow'd,
An universal deluge, which appears
Without an ark for wretched man's abode,
And ebbs but to reflow !—Renew thy rainbow, God !

XCIII.

What from this barren being do we reap .
Our senses narrow, and our reason frail,
Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep,
And all things weigh'd in custom's falsest scale ;
Opinion an omnipotence,—whose veil
Mantles the earth with darkness, until right
And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale
Lest their own judgments should become too bright, [light.
And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have too much

XCIV.

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,
Rotting from sire to son, and age to age,
Proud of their trampled nature, and so die,
Bequeathing their hereditary rage
To the new race of inborn slaves, who wage
War for their chains, and rather than be free,
Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage
Within the same arena where they see
Their fellows fall before, like leaves of the same tree.

XCV.

I speak not of men's creeds—they rest between
Man and his Maker—but of things allow'd,
Averr'd and known,—and daily, hourly seen—
The yoke that is upon us doubly bow'd,
And the intent of tyranny avow'd,
The edicts of earth's rulers, who are grown
The apes of him who humbled once the proud,
And shook them from their slumbers on the throne;
Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done.

XCVI.

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,
And Freedom find no champion and no child
Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and undefiled?
Or must such minds be nourish'd in the wild,
Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar
Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled,
On infant Washington? Has Earth no more
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore?

XCVII.

But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime,
And fatal have her Saturnalia been
To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime;
Because the deadly days which we have seen,
And vile ambition, that built up between
Man and his hopes an adamantine wall,
And the base pageant last upon the scene,
Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall
Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst—his second fa

XCVIII.

Yet freedom! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind;
Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
The loudest still the tempest leaves behind;
Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
But the sap lasts,—and still the seed we find
Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North;
So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

XCIX.

There is a storm round tower of other days,
Firm as a fortress, with its fence of stone,
Such as an army's baffled strength delays,
Standing with half its battlements alone,
And with two thousand years of ivy grown,
The garland of eternity, where wave
The green leaves over all by time o'erthrown ;—
What was this tower of strength ? within its cave.
What treasure lay so lock'd, so hid ?—A Woman's grave.

C.

But who was she, the lady of the dead,
Tomb'd in a palace ? Was she chaste and fair ?
Worthy a king's—or more—a Roman's bed ?
What race of chiefs and heroes did she bear ?
What daughter of her beauties was the heir ?
How lived—how loved—how died she ? Was she not
So honour'd—and conspicuously there,
Where meaner relics must not dare to rot,
Placed to commemorate a more than mortal lot ?

CI.

Was she as those who love their lords, or they
Who love the lords of others ? such have been
Even in the olden time, Rome's annals say.
Was she a matron of Cornelia's mien,
Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen,
Profuse of joy—or 'gainst it did she war,
Inveterate in virtue ? Did she lean
To the soft side of the heart, or wisely bar
Love from amongst her griefs ?—for such the affections are.

CII.

Perchance she died in youth: it may be, bow'd
With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb
That weigh'd upon her gentle dust, a cloud
Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom
In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom
Heaven gives its favourites—early death; yet shed
A sunset charm around her, and illume
With hectic light, the Hesperus of the dead,
Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red.

CIII.

Perchance she died in age—surviving all,
Charms, kindred, children—with the silver gray
On her long tresses, which might yet recall,
It may be, still a something of the day
When they were braided, and her proud array
And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed
By Rome—But whither would Conjecture stray?
Thus much alone we know—Metella died,
The wealthiest Roman's wife: Behold his love or pride!

CIV.

I know not why—but standing thus by thee
It seems as if I had thine inmate known,
Thou Tomb! and other days come back on me
With recollected music, though the tone
Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy groan
Of dying thunder on the distant wind;
Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone
Till I had bodied forth the heated mind
Forms from the floating wreck which Ruin leaves behind;

CV.

And from the planks, far shatter'd o'er the rocks,
Built me a little bark of hope, once more
To battle with the ocean and the shocks
Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless roar
Which rushes on the solitary shore
Where all lies founder'd that was ever dear:
But could I gather from the wave-worn store
Enough for my rude boat, where should I steer?
There woos no home, nor hope, nor life, save what is here.

CVI.

Then let the winds howl on! their harmony
Shall henceforth be my music, and the night
The sound shall temper with the owlets' cry,
As I now hear them, in the fading light
Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native site,
Answering each other on the Palatine,
With their large eyes, all glistening gray and bright,
And sailing pinions.—Upon such a shrine
What are our petty griefs?—let me not number mine.

CVII.

Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower grown
Matted and mass'd together, hillocks heap'd
On what were chambers, arch crush'd, column strown
In fragments, choked up vaults, and frescos steep'd
In subterranean damps, where the owl peep'd,
Deeming it midnight:—Temples, baths, or halls?
Pronounce who can; for all that Learning reap'd
From her research hath been, that these are walls—
Behold the Imperial Mount! 'tis thus the mighty falls.

CVIII.

There is the moral of all human tales*;
'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,
First Freedom, and then Glory—when that fails,
Wealth, vice, corruption,—barbarism at last.
And History, with all her volumes vast,
Hath but *one* page,—'tis better written here,
Where gorgeous Tyranny hath thus amass'd
All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear, [near.
Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask—Away with words! draw

CIX.

Admire, exult—despise—laugh, weep,—for here
There is such matter for all feeling:—Man!
Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear,
Ages and realms are crowded in this span,
This mountain, whose obliterated plan
The pyramid of empires pinnacled,
Of Glory's gewgaws shining in the van
Till the sun's rays with added flame were fill'd!
Where are its golden roofs? where those who dared to build?

CX.

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,
Thou nameless column with the buried base!
What are the laurels of the Cæsars' brow?
Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place.
Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,
Titus or Trajan's? No—'tis that of Time:
Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace
Scoffing; and apostolic statues climb
To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime,

CXI.

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,
And looking to the stars: they had contain'd
A spirit which with these would find a home,
The last of those who o'er the whole earth reign'd,
The Roman globe, for after none sustain'd,
But yielded back his conquests:—he was more
Than a mere Alexander, and, unstain'd
With household blood and wine, serenely wore
His sovereign virtues—still we Trajan's name adore.

CXII.

Where is the rock of Triumph, the high place
Where Rome embraced her heroes? where the steep
Tarpeian? fittest goal of Treason's race,
The promontory whence the Traitor's Leap
Cured all ambition. Did the conquerors heap
Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field below,
A thousand years of silenced factions sleep—
The Forum, where the immortal accents glow,
And still the eloquent air breathes—burns with Cicero!

CXIII.

The field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood:
Here a proud people's passions were exhaled,
From the first hour of empire in the bud
To that when further worlds to conquer fail'd;
But long before had Freedom's face been veil'd,
And Anarchy assumed her attributes;
Till every lawless soldier who assail'd
Trod on the trembling senate's slavish mutes,
Or raised the venal voice of baser prostitutes.

CXIV.

Then turn we to her latest tribune's name,
From her ten thousand tyrants turn to thee,
Redeemer of dark centuries of shame—
The friend of Petrarch—hope of Italy—
Rienzi ! last of Romans ! While the tree
Of freedom's wither'd trunk puts forth a leaf,
Even for thy tomb a garland let it be—
The forum's champion, and the people's chief—
Her new-born Numa thou—with reign, alas ! too brief.

CXV.

Egeria ! sweet creation of some heart
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair
As thine ideal breast ; whate'er thou art
Or wert,—a young Aurora of the air,
The nympholepsy of some fond despair ;
Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,
Who found a more than common votary there
Too much adoring ; whatsoe'er thy birth,
Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth.

CXVI.

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled
With thine Elysian water-drops ; the face
Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years unwrinkled,
Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,
Whose green, wild margin now no more erase
Art's works ; nor must the delicate waters sleep,
Prison'd in marble, bubbling from the base
Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap
The rill runs o'er, and round, fern, flowers, and ivy creep,

CXVII.

Fantastically tangled: the green hills
Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass
The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass;
Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,
Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes
Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass;
The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,
Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems colour'd by its skies.

CXVIII.

Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,
Egeria! thy all heavenly bosom beating
For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover;
The purple Midnight veil'd that mystic meeting
With her most starry canopy, and seating
Thyself by thine adorer, what befel?
This cave was surely shaped out for the greeting
Of an enamour'd Goddess, and the cell
Haunted by holy Love—the earliest oracle!

CXIX.

And did'st thou not, thy breast to his replying,
Blend a celestial with a human heart;
And Love, which dies as it was born, in sighing,
Share with immortal transports? could thine art
Make them indeed immortal, and impart
The purity of heaven to earthly joys,
Expel the venom and not blunt the dart—
The dull satiety which all destroys—
And root from out the soul the deadly weed which cloys?

CXX.

Alas! our young affections run to waste,
Or water but the desert; whence arise
But weeds of dark Luxuriance, tares of haste,
Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes,
Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies,
And trees whose gums are poison; such the plants
Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies
O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants
For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants.

CXXI.

Oh Love! no habitant of earth thou art—
An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,
A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart,
But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall see
The naked eye, thy form, as it should be;
The mind hath made thee, as it peopled heaven,
Even with its own desiring phantasy,
And to a thought such shape and image given, [and riven
As haunts the unquench'd soul—parch'd—wearied—wrung—

CXXII.

Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,
And fevers into false creation:—where,
Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath seized?
In him alone. Can nature show so fair?
Where are the charms and virtues which we dare
Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men,
The unreach'd Paradise of our despair,
Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,
And overpowers the page where it would bloom again?

CXXIII.

Who loves, raves—'tis youth's frenzy—but the cure
Is bitterer still; as charm by charm unwinds
Which robed our idols, and we see too sure
Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out the mind's
Ideal shape of such; yet still it binds
The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,
Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-sown winds;
The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun,
Seems ever near the prize,—wealthiest when most undone.

CXXIV.

We wither from our youth, we gasp away—
Sick—sick; unfound the boon—unslaked the thirst,
Though to the last, in verge of our decay,
Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first—
But all too late,—so are we doubly curst.
Love, fame, ambition, avarice—'t is the same,
Each idle—and all ill—and none the worst—
For all are meteors with a different name,
And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame.

CXXV.

Few—none—find what they love or could have loved,
Though accident, blind contact, and the strong
Necessity of loving, have removed
Antipathies—but to recur, ere long,
Envenom'd with irrevocable wrong;
And Circumstance, that unspiritual god
And miscreator, makes and helps along
Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,
Whose touch turns Hope to dust,—the dust we all have trc

CXXVI.

Our life is a false nature—'tis not in
The harmony of things,—this hard decree,
This uneradicable taint of sin,
This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree,
Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be
The skies, which rain their plagues on men like dew—
Disease, death, bondage—all the woes we see—
And worse, the woes we see not—which throb through
The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.

CXXVII.

Yet let us ponder boldly—'tis a base
Abandonment of reason to resign
Our right of thought—our last and only place
Of refuge; this, at least, shall still be mine;
Though from our birth the faculty divine
Is chain'd and tortured—cabin'd, cribb'd, confined,
And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine
Too brightly on the unprepared mind,
The beam pours in, for time and skill will couch the blind.

CXXVIII.

Arches on arches! as it were that Rome,
Collecting the chief trophies of her line,
Would build up all her triumphs in one dome,
Her Coliseum stands; the moonbeams shine
As 't were its natural torches, for divine
Should be the light which streams here, to illume
This long-explored but still exhaustless mine
Of contemplation; and the azure gloom
Of an Italian night, where the deep skies assume,

CXXIX.

Hues which have words, and speak to ye of heaven,
Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,
And shadows forth its glory. There is given
Unto the things of earth, which time hath bent,
A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant
His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power
And magic in the ruin'd battlement,
For which the palace of the present hour
Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages are its dower.

CXXX.

Oh Time! the beautifier of the dead,
Adorner of the ruin, comforter
And only healer when the heart hath bled—
Time! the corrector where our judgment's err,
The test of truth, love,—sole philosopher,
For all beside are sophists, from thy thrift,
Which never loses though it doth defer—
Time, the avenger! unto thee I lift
My hands, and eyes, and heart, and crave of thee a gift:

CXXXI.

Amidst this wreck where thou hast made a shrine
And temple more divinely desolate,
Among thy mightier offerings here are mine,
Ruins of years—though few, yet full of fate:—
If thou hast ever seen me too elate,
Hear me not; but if calmly I have borne,
Good, and reserved my pride against the hate
Which shall not whelm me, let me not have worn
This iron in my soul in vain—shall *they* not mourn?

CXXXII.

And thou, who never yet of human wrong
Left the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis!
Here, where the ancient paid thee homage long—
Thou, who didst call the Furies from the abyss,
And round Orestes bade them howl and hiss
For that unnatural retribution—just,
Had it but been from hands less near—in this
Thy former realm, I call thee from the dust!
Dost thou not hear my heart? Awake! thou shalt, and mus

CXXXIII.

It is not that I may not have incurr'd
For my ancestral faults or mine the wound
I bleed withal, and, had it been conferr'd
With a just weapon, it had flow'd unbound;
But now my blood shall not sink in the ground;
To thee I do devote it—*thou* shalt take
The vengeance, which shall yet be sought and found,
Which if *I* have not taken for the sake———
But let that pass—I sleep, but thou shalt yet awake.

CXXXIV.

And if my voice break forth, 'tis not that now
I shrink from what is suffer'd: let him speak
Who hath beheld decline upon my brow,
Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it weak;
But in this page a record will I seek.
Not in the air shall these my words disperse,
Though I be ashes; a far hour shall wreak
The deep prophetic fulness of this verse,
And pile on human heads the mountain of my curse!

CXXXV.

That curse shall be Forgiveness.—Have I not—
Hear me, my mother Earth! behold it, Heaven!—
Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?
Have I not suffer'd things to be forgiven?
Have I not had my brain scar'd, my heart riven,
Hopes sapp'd, name blighted, Life's life lied away?
And only not to desperation driven,
Because not altogether of such clay
As rots into the souls of those whom I survey.

CXXXVI.

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy
Have I not seen what human things could do?
From the loud roar of foaming calumny
To the small whisper of the as paltry few,
And subtler venom of the reptile crew,
The Janus glance of whose significant eye,
Learning to lie with silence, would *seem* true,
And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,
Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.

CXXXVII

But I have lived, and have not lived in vain;
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
And my frame perish even in conquering pain;
But there is that within me which shall tire
Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire;
Something unearthly, which they deem not of,
Like the remember'd tone of a mute lyre,
Shall on their soften'd spirits sink, and move
In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love.

CXXXVIII.

The seal is set.—Now welcome, thou dread power!
Nameless, yet thus omnipotent, which here
Walk'st in the shadow of the midnight hour
With a deep awe, yet all distinct from fear;
Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls rear
Their ivy mantles, and the solemn scene
Derives from thee a sense so deep and clear
That we become a part of what has been,
And grow unto the spot, all-seeing but unseen.

CXXXIX.

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd applause,
As man was slaughter'd by his fellow man,
And wherefore slaughter'd? wherefore, but because
Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore not?
What matters where we fall to fill the maws
Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot?
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

CXL.

I see before me the Gladiator lie:
He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower: and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone, [wor
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch wh

CXLI.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butchered to make a Roman holiday—
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire
And unavenged?—Arise ye Goths, and glut your ire!

CXLII.

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody steam;
And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,
My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint rays
On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls bow'd—
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

CXLIII.

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd;
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.
Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd?
Alas! developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd:
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all, years, man, have reft away.

CXLIV.

But when the rising moon begins to climb
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
And the low night-breeze waves along the air
The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
Like laurels on the the bald first Cæsar's head;
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
Then in this magic circle raise the dead:
Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread.

CXLV.

"While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;
"When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;
"And when Rome falls—the World." From our own land
Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall
In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
Ancient; and these three mortal things are still
On their foundations, and unalter'd all;
Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,
The World, the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye will.

CXLVI.

Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime—
Shrine of all saints, and temple of all gods,
From Jove to Jesus—spared and bless'd by time;
Looking tranquillity, while falls, or nods
Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and man plods
His way through thorns to ashes—glorious dome!
Shalt thou not last? Time's scythe and tyrants' rods
Shiver upon thee—sanctuary and home
Of art and piety—Pantheon!—pride of Rome!

CXLVII.

Relic of nobler days and noblest arts!
Despoil'd yet perfect, with thy circle spreads
A holiness appealing to all hearts—
To art a model; and to him who treads
Rome for the sake of ages, Glory sheds
Her light through thy sole aperture: to those
Who worship, here are altars for their beads;
And they who feel for genius may repose
Their eyes on honour'd forms, whose busts around them close.

CXLVIII.

There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear light
What do I gaze on? Nothing: Look again!
Two forms are slowly shadow'd on my sight—
Two insulated phantoms of the brain:
It is not so: I see them full and plain—
An old man and a female, young and fair,
Fresh as a nursing mother, in whose vein
The blood is nectar:—but what doth she there,
With her unmantled neck, and bosom white and bare?

CXLIX.

Full swells the deep pure fountain of young life,
Where *on* the heart and *from* the heart we took
Our first and sweetest nurture, when the wife,
Blest into mother, in the innocent look,
Or even the pigging cry of lips that brook
No pain and small suspense, a joy perceives
Man knows not, when from out its cradled nook
She sees her little bud put forth its leaves—
What may the fruit be yet?—I know not—Cain was Eve's.

CL.

But here youth offers to old age the food,
The milk of his own gift:—it is her sire
To whom she renders back the debt of blood
Born with her birth. No; he shall not expire
While in those warm and lovely veins the fire
Of health and holy feeling can provide
Great Nature's Nile, whose deep stream rises higher
Than Egypt's river:—from that gentle side [tide.
Drink, drink and live, old man! Heaven's realm holds no such

CLI.

The starry fable of the milky way
Has not thy story's purity; it is
A constellation of a sweeter ray,
And sacred Nature triumphs more in this
Reverse of her decree, than in the abyss
Where sparkle distant worlds:—Oh, holiest nurse!
No drop of that clear stream its way shall miss
To thy sire's heart, replenishing its source
With life, as our freed souls rejoin the universe.

CLII.

Turn to the Mole which Hadrian rear'd on high,
Imperial mimic of old Egypt's piles,
Colossal copyist of deformity,
Whose travell'd phantasy from the far Nile's
Enormous model, doom'd the artist's toils
To build for giants, and for his vain earth,
His shrunken ashes, raise this dome: How smiles
The gazer's eye with philosophic mirth,
To view the huge design which sprung from such a birth!

CLIII.

But lo! the dome—the vast and wondrous dome,
To which Diana's marvel was a cell—
Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb!
I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle—
Its columns strew the wilderness, and dwell
The hyæna and the jackal in their shade;
I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs swell
Their glittering mass i' the sun, and have survey'd
Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem pray'd;

CLIV.

But thou, of temples old, or altars new,
Standest alone—with nothing like to thee—
Worthiest of God, the holy and the true.
Since Zion's desolation, when that He
Forsook his former city, what could be,
Of earthly structures, in his honour piled,
Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,
Power, Glory, Srength, and Beauty, all are aisled
In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.

CLV.

Enter: its grandeur overwhelms thee not;
And why? it is not lessen'd; but thy mind,
Expanded by the genius of the spot,
Has grown colossal, and can only find
A fit abode wherein appear enshrined
Thy hopes of immortality: and thou
Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,
See thy God face to face, as thou dost now
His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by his brow.

CLVI.

Thou movest—but increasing with the advance,
Like climbing some great Alp, which still doth rise,
Deceived by its gigantic elegance;
Vastness which grows—but grows to harmonise—
All musical in its immensities;
Rich marbles—richer painting—shrines where flame
The lamps of gold—and haughty dome which vies
In air with Earth's chief structures, though their frame
Sits on the firm-set ground—and this the clouds must claim.

CLVII.

Thou seest not all; but piecemeal thou must break,
To separate contemplation, the great whole;
And as the ocean many bays will make,
That ask the eye—so here condense thy soul
To more immediate objects, and control.
Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart
Its eloquent proportions, and unroll
In mighty graduations, part by part,
The glory which at once upon thee did not dart,

CLVIII.

Not by its fault—but thine: Our outward sense
Is but of gradual grasp—and as it is
That what we have of feeling most intense
Outstrips our faint expression; even so this
Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice
Fools our fond gaze, and greatest of the great
Defies at first our Nature's littleness,
Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate
Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

CLIX.

Then pause, and be enlighten'd; there is more
In such a survey than the sating gaze
Of wonder pleased, or awe which would adore
The worship of the place, or the mere praise
Of art and its great masters, who could raise
What former time, nor skill, nor thought could plan;
The fountain of sublimity displays
Its depth, and thence may draw the mind of man
Its golden sands, and learn what great conceptions can.

CLX.

Or, turning to the Vatican, go see
Laocoon's torture dignifying pain—
A father's love and mortal's agony
With an immortal's patience blending:—Vain
The struggle; vain, against the coiling strain
And gripe, and deepening of the dragon's grasp,
The old man's clench; the long envenom'd chain
Rivets the living links,—the enormous asp
Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp.

CLXI.

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,
The God of life, and poesy, and light—
The Sun in human limbs array'd, and brow
All radiant from his triumph in the fight;
The shaft hath just been shot—the arrow bright
With an immortal's vengeance; in his eye
And nostril beautiful disdain, and might
And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,
Developing in that one glance the Deity.

CLXII.

But in his delicate form—a dream of Love,
Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast
Long'd for a deathless lover from above,
And madden'd in that vision—are exprest
All that ideal beauty ever bless'd
The mind within its most unearthly mood,
When each conception was a heavenly guest—
A ray of immortality—and stood,
Starlike, around, until they gather'd to a god!

CLXIII.

And if it be Prometheus stole from Heaven
The fire which we endure, it was repaid
By him to whom the energy was given
Which this poetic marble hath array'd
With an eternal glory—which, if made
By human hands, is not of human thought;
And time himself hath hallow'd it nor laid
One ringlet in the dust—nor hath it caught [wrought,
A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which 'twas

CLXIV.

But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song,
The being who upheld it through the past?
Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.
He is no more—these breathings are his last;
His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,
And he himself as nothing: if he was
Aught but a phantasy, and could be class'd
With forms which live and suffer—let that pass—
His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass,

CLXV.

Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all
That we inherit in its mortal shroud,
And spreads the dim and universal pall
Through which all things grow phantoms; and the cloud
Between us sinks and all which ever glow'd,
Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays
A melancholy halo scarce allow'd
To hover on the verge of darkness; rays
Sadder than saddest night, for they distract the gaze,

CLXVI.

And send us prying into the abyss,
To gather what we shall be when the frame
Shall be resolved to something less than this
Its wretched essence; and to dream of fame,
And wipe the dust from off the idle name
We never more shall hear,—but never more,
Oh, happier thought! can we be made the same;
It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore
These fardels of the heart—the heart whose sweat was gore.

CLXVII.

Hark! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds.
A long low distant murmur of dread sound,
Such as arises when a nation bleeds
With some deep and immedicable wound;
Through storm and darkness yawns the rending ground,
The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the chief
Seems royal still, though with her head discrown'd,
And pale, but lovely, with maternal grief
She clasps a babe, to whom her breast yields no relief.

CLXVIII.

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou?
Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead?
Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low
Some less majestic, less beloved head?
In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,
The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
Death hush'd that pang for ever: with thee fled
The present happiness and promised joy
Which fill'd the imperial isles so full it seem'd to cloy.

CLXIX.

Peasants bring forth in safety.—Can it be,
Oh thou that wert so happy, so adored!
Those who weep not for kings shall weep for thee,
And Freedom's heart, grown heavy, cease to hoard
Her many griefs for ONE; for she had pour'd
Her orisons for thee, and o'er thy head
Beheld her Iris.—Thou, too, lonely lord,
And desolate consort—vainly wert thou wed!
The husband of a year! the father of the dead!

CLXX.

Of sackcloth was thy wedding garment made;
Thy bridal's fruit is ashes: in the dust
The fair-haired Daughter of the Isles is laid,
The love of millions! How we did entrust
Futurity to her! and though it must
Darken above our bones, yet fondly deem'd
Our children should obey her child, and bless'd
Her and her hoped-for seed, whose promise seem'd
Like stars to shepherds' eyes:—'twas but a meteor beam'd.

CLXXI.

Woe unto us, not her; for she sleeps well:
The fickle reek of popular breath, the tongue
Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,
Which from the birth of monarchy hath rung
Its knell in princely ears, till the o'erstung
Nations have arm'd in madness, the strange fate
Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and hath flung
Against their blind omnipotence a weight
Within the opposing scale, which crushes soon or late,—

CLXXII.

These might have been her destiny; but no,
Our hearts deny it: and so young, so fair,
Good without effort, great without a foe;
But now a bride and mother—and now *there!*
How many ties did that stern moment tear!
From thy Sire's to his humblest subject's breast
Is link'd the electric chain of that despair,
Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and opprest
The land which loved thee so that none could love thee best.

CLXXIII.

Lo, Nemi! navell'd in the woody hills
So far, that the uprooting wind, which tears
The oak from his foundation, and which spills
The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake;
And, calm as cherish'd hate, its surface wears
A deep cold settled aspect nought can shake,
All coil'd into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.

CLXXIV.

And near Albano's scarce divided waves
Shine from a sister valley;—and afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves
The Latian coast where sprung the Epic war,
"Arms and the Man,"—whose re-ascending star
Rose o'er an empire:—but beneath thy right
Tully reposed from Rome;—and where yon bar
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight,
The Sabine farm was till'd, the weary bard's delight.

CLXXV.

But I forget.—My Pilgrim's shrine is won,
And he and I must part,—so let it be—
His task and mine alike are nearly done;
Yet once more let us look upon the sea;
The midland ocean breaks on him and me,
And from the Alban Mount we now behold
Our friend of youth, that Ocean, which when we
Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
Those waves, we follow'd on till the dark Euxine roll'd

CLXXVI.

Upon the blue Symplegades: long years—
Long, though not very many, since have done
Their work on both; some suffering and some tears
Have left us nearly where we had begun:
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run,
We have had our reward—and it is here;
That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,
And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear
As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

CLXXVII.

Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place,
With one fair Spirit for my minister,
That I might all forget the human race,
And, hating no one, love but only her!
Ye Elements!—in whose ennobling stir
I feel myself exalted—Can ye not
Accord me such a being? Do I err
In deeming such inhabit many a spot?
Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

CLXXVIII.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet can not all conceal.

CLXXIX.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

CLXXX.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth;—there let him lay.

CLXXXI.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

CLXXXII.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters wasted them while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to desert:—not so thou,
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

CLXXXIII.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of Eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

CLXXXIV.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful spots was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'t was a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

CLXXXV.

My task is done—my song hath ceased—my theme
Has died into an echo; it is fit
The spell should break of this protracted dream.
The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath lit
My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is writ,—
Would it were worthier! but I am not now
That which I have been—and my visions flit
Less palpably before me—and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and low.

CLXXXV.

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been—
A sound which makes us linger;—yet—farewell!
Ye! who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene
Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
A thought which once was his, if on ye swell
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore his sandal-shoon, and scallop-shell;
Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the pain,
If such there were—with *you*, the moral of his strain!

ON THE PLEASURES OF THE IMAGINATION.

PAPER I.

CONTENTS.

The perfection of our sight above our other senses. The pleasures of the imagination arise originally from sight. The pleasures of the imagination divided under two heads. The pleasures of the imagination in some respects equal to those of the understanding. The extent of the pleasures of the imagination. The advantages a man receives from a relish of these pleasures. In what respect they are preferable to those of the understanding.

Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante
Trita solo: juvat integros accedere fontes,
Atque haurere———

LUCR. I. 925

In wild unclear'd, to Muses a retreat,
O'er ground untrod before, I devious roam,
And deep enamour'd into latent springs
Presume to peep at coy virgin Naiads.

OUR sight is the most perfect and most delightful of all our senses. It fills the mind with the

largest variety of ideas, converses with its objects at the greatest distance, and continues the longest in action, without being tired or satiated with its proper enjoyments. The sense of feeling can indeed give us a notion of extension, shape, and all other ideas that enter at the eye, except colours; but at the same time it is very much straitened, and confined in its operations to the number, bulk, and distance of its particular objects. Our sight seems designed to supply all these defects, and may be considered as a more delicate and diffusive kind of touch, that spreads itself over an infinite multitude of bodies, comprehends the largest figures, and brings into our reach some of the most remote parts of the universe.

It is this sense which furnishes the imagination with its ideas; so that by "the pleasures of the imagination," or "fancy" (which I shall use promiscuously), I here mean such as arise from visible objects, either when we have them actually in our view, or when we call up their ideas into our minds by painting, statues, descriptions, or any the like occasion. We cannot indeed, have a single image in the fancy that did not make its first entrance through the sight; but we have the power of retaining, altering, and compounding those images which we have once received, into all the varieties of picture and vision that are most agreeable to the imagination: for by this faculty, a man in a dungeon is capable of entertaining himself with scenes and landscapes more beautiful than any that can be found in the whole compass of nature.

There are few words in the English language which are employed in a more loose and uncircumscribed sense than those of the fancy and the imagination. I therefore thought it necessary to fix and determine the notion of these two words, as I intend to make use of them in the thread of my following speculations, that the reader may conceive rightly what is the subject which I proceed upon, I must therefore desire him to remember, that by "the pleasures of the imagination," I mean only such pleasures as arise originally from sight, and that I divide these pleasures into two kinds: my design being first of all to discourse of those primary pleasures of the imagination, which entirely proceed from such objects as are before our eyes; and in the next place to speak of those secondary pleasures of the imagination which flow from the ideas of visible objects, when the objects are not actually before the eye, but are called up into our memories, or formed into agreeable visions of things that are either absent or fictitious.

The pleasures of the imagination, taken in their full extent, are not so gross as those of sense, nor so refined as those of the understanding. The last are indeed more preferable, because they are founded on some new knowledge or improvement in the mind of man; yet it must be confessed, that those of the imagination are as great and as transporting as the other. A beautiful prospect delights the soul as much as a demonstration; and a description in Homer has charmed more readers than a chapter in Aristotle. Besides, the pleasures of the imagi-

nation have this advantage above those of the understanding, that they are more obvious and more easy to be acquired. It is but opening the eye, and the scene enters. The colours paint themselves on the fancy, with very little attention of thought or application of mind in the beholder. We are struck, we know not how, with the symmetry of any thing we see, and immediately assent to the beauty of an object, without inquiring into the particular causes and occasions of it.

A man of a polite imagination is let into a great many pleasures that the vulgar are not capable of receiving. He can converse with a picture, and find an agreeable companion in a statue. He meets with a secret refeshment in a description, and often feels a greater satisfaction in the prospect of fields and meadows, than another does in the possession. It gives him, indeed, a kind of property in every thing he sees, and makes the most rude uncultivated parts of nature administer to his pleasures; so that he looks upon the world as it were in another light, and discovers in it a multitude of charms, that conceal themselves from the generality of mankind.

There are indeed but very few who know how to be idle and innocent, or have a relish of any pleasures that are not criminal; every diversion they take is at the expense of some one virtue or another, and their very first step out of business is into vice or folly. A man should endeavour, therefore, to make the sphere of his innocent pleasures as wide as possible, that he may retire into them with safety, and find in

them such a satisfaction as a wise man would not blush to take. Of this nature are those of the imagination, which do not require such a bent of thought as is necessary to our more serious employments, nor, at the same time, suffer the mind to sink into that negligence and remissness, which are apt to accompany our more sensual delights, but, like a gentle exercise to the faculties, awaken them from sloth and idleness, without putting them upon any labour or difficulty.

We might here add, that the pleasures of the fancy are more conducive to health than those of the understanding, which are worked out by dint of thinking, and attended with too violent a labour of the brain. Delightful scenes, whether in nature, painting, or poetry, have a kindly influence on the body as well as the mind: and not only serve to clear and brighten the imagination, but are able to disperse grief and melancholy, and to set the animal spirits in pleasing and agreeable motions. For this reason, Sir Francis Bacon, in his Essay upon Health, has not thought it improper to prescribe to his reader a poem or a prospect, where he particularly dissuades him from knotty and subtle disquisitions, and advises him to pursue studies that fill the mind with splendid and illustrious objects, as histories, fables and contemplations of nature.

I have in this paper, by way of introduction, settled the notion of those pleasures of the imagination which are the subject of my present undertaking, and endeavoured, by several considerations, to recommend to my reader the pursuit

those pleasures. I shall in my next paper examine the several sources from whence these pleasures are derived.—O.

PAPER II.

CONTENTS.

hree sources of all the pleasures of the imagination, in our survey of outward objects. How what is great pleases the imagination. How what is new pleases the imagination. How what is beautiful in our species pleases the imagination. How what is beautiful in general pleases the imagination. What other accidental causes may contribute to the heightening of those pleasures.

——*Divisum sic breve fiet opus*—MART. EQ. IV, 83.

The work, divided aptly, shorter grows.

I SHALL first consider those pleasures of the magination which arise from the actual view nd survey of outward objects: and these, I hink, all proceed from the sight of what is great, ncommon, or beautiful. There may, indeed, be omething so terrible, or offensive, that the horror r loathsomeness of an object may overbear the leasure which results from its greatness, novel- y, or beauty: but still there will be such a mix- ure of delight in the very disgust it gives us, as any of these three qualifications are most conspicuous and prevailing.

By greatness, I do not only mean the bulk of any single object, but the largeness of a whole view, considered as one entire piece. Such are the prospects of an open champaign country, a vast uncultivated desert, of huge heaps of mountains, high rocks and precipices, or a wide expanse of water, where we are not struck with the

novelty or beauty of the sight, but with that rude kind of magnificence which appears in many of these stupendous works of nature. Our imagination loves to be filled with an object, or to grasp at any thing that is too big for its capacity. We are flung into a pleasing astonishment at such unbounded views, and feel a delightful stillness and amazement in the soul at the apprehension of them. The mind of man naturally hates every thing that looks like a restraint upon it, and is apt to fancy itself under a sort of confinement, when the sight is pent up in a narrow compass, and shortened on every side by the neighbourhood of walls or mountains. On the contrary, a spacious horison is an image of liberty, where the eye has room to range abroad, to expatiate at large on the immensity of its views, and to lose itself amidst the variety of objects that offer themselves to its observation. Such wide and undetermined prospects are as pleasing to the fancy as the speculations of eternity or infinitude are to the understanding. But if there be a beauty or uncommonness joined with this grandeur, as in a troubled ocean, a heaven adorned with stars and meteors, or a spacious landscape cut out into rivers, woods, rocks, and meadows, the pleasure still grows upon us, as it arises from more than a single principle.

Every thing that is new or uncommon raises a pleasure in the imagination, because it fills the soul with an agreeable surprise, gratifies its curiosity, and gives it an idea of which it was not before possessed. We are indeed so often conversant with one set of objects, and tired

out with so many repeated shows of the same things, that whatever is new or uncommon contributes a little to vary human life, and to divert our minds for a while with the strangeness of its appearance. It serves us for a kind of refreshment, and takes us off from that satiety we are apt to complain of, in our usual and ordinary entertainments. It is this that bestows charms on a monster, and makes even the imperfections of nature please us. It is this that recommends variety, where the mind is every instant called off to something new, and the attention not suffered to dwell too long, and waste itself on any particular object. It is this, likewise, that improves what is great or beautiful, and makes it afford the mind a double entertainment. Groves, fields, and meadows, are at any season of the year pleasant to look upon, but never so much as in the opening of the spring, when they are all new and fresh, with their first gloss upon them, and not yet too much accustomed and familiar to the eye. For this reason there is nothing that more enlivens a prospect than rivers, jetteaus, or falls of water, where the scene is perpetually shifting, and entertaining the sight every moment with something that is new. We are quickly tired with looking upon hills and valleys, where every thing continues fixed and settled in the same place and posture, but find our thoughts a little agitated and relieved at the sight of such objects as are ever in motion, and sliding away from beneath the eye of the beholder.

But there is nothing that makes its way more

directly to the soul than beauty, which immediately diffuses a secret satisfaction and complacency through the imagination, and gives a finishing to any thing that is great or uncommon. The very first discovery of it strikes the mind with an inward joy, and spreads a cheerfulness and delight through all its faculties. There is not perhaps any real beauty or deformity more in one piece of matter than another, because we might have been so made, that whatsoever now appears loathsome to us might have shown itself agreeable; but we find by experience that there are several modifications of matter, which the mind, without any previous consideration, pronounces at first sight beautiful or deformed. Thus we see that every different species of sensible creatures has its different notions of beauty, and that each of them is most affected with the beauties of its own kind. This is no where more remarkable than in birds of the same shape and proportion, where we often see the male determined in his courtship by the single grain or tincture of a feather, and never discovering any charms but in the colour of its species.

Scit thalamo servare fidem, sanctasque veretur
Connubii leges; non illum in pectore candor
Solicitat niveus; neque pravum accendit amorem
Splendida lanugo, vel honesta in vertice crista,
Purpureusve nitor pennarum; ast agmina late
Fœminea explorat cautus, maculasque requirit
Cognatas, paribusque interlita corpora guttis;
Ni faceret, pictis sylvam circum undique monstris
Confusam aspiceres vulgo partusque biformes,
Et genus ambiguum, et veneris monumenta nefandæ.

Hinc merula in nigro se oblectat nigra marito ;
Hinc socium lasciva petit Philomela canorum,
Agnoscitque pares sonitus ; hinc noctua tetram
Canitiem alarum, et glaucos miratur ocellos.
Nempe sibi semper constat, crescitque quotannis
Lucida progenies, castos confessa parentes ;
Dum virides inter saltus lucosque sonoros
Vere novo exultat, plumasque decora juventus
Explicat ad solem patriisque coloribus ardet.

The feather'd husband, to his partner true,
Preserves connubial rites inviolate.
With cold indifference every charm he sees,
The milky whiteness of the stately neck,
The shining down, proud crest, and purple wings :
But cautious with a searching eye explores
The female tribes, his proper mate to find,
With kindred colours mark'd ; did he not so,
The grove with painted monsters would abound ;
Th' ambiguous product of unnatural love.
The blackbird hence selects her sooty spouse ;
The nightingale her musical compeer,
Lur'd by the well-known voice, the bird of night,
Smit with his dusky wings and greenish eyes,
Woos his dun paramour. The beauteous race
Speak the chaste loves of their progenitors ;
When, by the spring invited, they exult
In woods and fields, and to the sun unfold
Their plumes, that with paternal colours glow.

There is a second kind of beauty that we find in the several products of art and nature, which does not work in the imagination with that warmth and violence as the beauty that appears in our proper species, but is apt however to raise in us a secret delight, and a kind of

fondness for the places or objects in which we discover it. This consists either in the gaiety or variety of colours, in the symmetry and proportion of parts, in the arrangement and disposition of bodies, or in a just mixture and concurrence of all together. Among these several kinds of beauty the eye takes most delight in colours. We nowhere meet with a more glorious or pleasing show in nature, than what appears in the heavens at the rising and setting of the sun, which is wholly made up of those different stains of light that show themselves in clouds of a different situation. For this reason we find the poets, who are always addressing themselves to the imagination, borrowing more of their epithets from colours, than from any other topic.

As the fancy delights in every thing that is great, strange, or beautiful, and is still more pleased the more it finds of these perfections in the same object, so it is capable of receiving a satisfaction by the assistance of another sense. Thus, any continued sound, as the music of birds, or a fall of water, awakens every moment the mind of the beholder, and makes him more attentive to the several beauties of the place that lie before him. Thus, if there arises a fragrancy of smells or perfumes, they heighten the pleasures of the imagination, and make even the colours and verdure of the landscape appear more agreeable; for the ideas of both senses recommend each other, and are pleasanter together than when they enter the mind separately: as the different colours of a picture, when they are well disposed, set off one another, and re-

ceive an additional beauty from the advantage of their situation.—O.

PAPER III.

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Why the necessary cause of our being pleased with what is great, new, or beautiful, unknown. Why the final cause more known and more useful. The final cause of our being pleased with what is great. The final cause of our being pleased with what is new. The final cause of our being pleased with what is beautiful in our own species. The final cause of our being pleased with what is beautiful in general.

——*Causæ, latet, vis est notissima*——OVID. MET. IX, 207.

The cause is secret, but the effect is known.—ADDISON.

THOUGH in yesterday's paper we considered how every thing that is great, new, or beautiful is apt to affect the imagination with pleasure, we must own that it is impossible for us to assign the necessary cause of this pleasure, because we know neither the nature of an idea, nor the substance of a human soul, which might help us to discover the conformity or disagreeableness of the one to the other; and therefore, for want of such a light, all that we we can do in speculations of this kind, is to reflect on those operations of the soul that are most agreeable, and to range, under their proper heads, what is pleasing or displeasing to the mind, without being able to trace out the several necessary and efficient causes from whence the pleasure or displeasure arises.

Final causes lie more bare and open to our observation, as they are often a greater variety that belong to the same effect; and these, though

they are not altogether so satisfactory, are generally more useful than the other, as they give us greater occasion of admiring the goodness and wisdom of the first Contriver.

One of the final causes of our delight in any thing that is great may be this. The Supreme Author of our being has so formed the soul of man, that nothing but himself can be its last, adequate, and proper happiness. Because, therefore, a great part of our happiness must arise from the contemplation of his being, that he might give our souls a just relish for such a contemplation, he has made them naturally delight in the apprehension of what is great or unlimited. Our admiration, which is a very pleasing emotion of the mind, immediately rises at the consideration of any object that takes up a great deal of room in the fancy, and, by consequence, will improve into the highest pitch of astonishment and devotion when we contemplate his nature, that is neither circumscribed by time nor place, nor to be comprehended by the largest capacity of a created being.

He has annexed a secret pleasure to the idea of any thing that is new or uncommon, that he might encourage us in the pursuit after knowledge, and engage us to search into the wonders of his creation; for every new idea brings such a pleasure with it, as rewards any pains we have taken in its acquisition, and consequently serves as a motive to put us upon fresh discoveries.

He has made every thing that is beautiful in our own species pleasant, that all creatures might be tempted to multiply their kind, and fill the

world with inhabitants; for it is very remarkable, that wherever nature is crossed in the production of a monster (the result of any unnatural mixture), the breed is incapable of propagating its likeness, and of founding a new order of creatures: so that, unless all animals were allured by the beauty of their own species, generation would be at an end, and the earth unpeopled.

"In the last place, he has made every thing that is beautiful in all other objects pleasant, or rather has made so many objects appear beautiful, that he might render the whole creation more gay and delightful. He has given almost every thing about us the power of raising agreeable ideas in the imagination: so that it is impossible for us to behold his works with coldness or indifference, and to survey so many beauties without a secret satisfaction and complacency. Things would make but a poor appearance to the eye, if we saw them only in their proper figures and motions: and what reason can we assign for their exciting in us many of those ideas which are different from any thing that exists in the objects themselves (for such are light and colours), were it not to add supernumerary ornaments to the universe, and make it more agreeable to the imagination? We are every where entertained with pleasing shows and apparitions: we discover imaginary glories in the heavens and in the earth, and see some of this visionary beauty poured out upon the whole creation: but what a rough unsightly sketch of nature should we be entertained with, did all her colouring disappear, and the several distinctions of light and shade vanish?

In short, our souls are at present delightfully lost and bewildered in a pleasing delusion, and we walk about like the enchanted hero of a romance, who sees beautiful castles, woods, and meadows; and, at the same time, hears the warbling of birds, and the purling of streams; but upon the finishing of some secret spell the fantastic scene breaks up, and the disconsolate knight finds him on a barren heath, or in a solitary desert. It is not improbable that something like this may be the state of the soul after its first separation, in respect of the images it will receive from matter; though indeed the ideas of colours are so pleasing and beautiful in the imagination, that it is possible the soul will not be deprived of them, but perhaps find them excited by some other occasional cause, as they are at present by the different impressions of the subtle matter on the organ of sight.

I have here supposed that my reader is acquainted with that great modern discovery, which is at present universally acknowledged by all the inquirers into natural philosophy: namely, that light and colours, as apprehended by the imagination, are only ideas in the mind, and not qualities that have any existence in matter. As this is a truth which has been proved incontestably by many modern philosophers, and is indeed one of the finest speculations in that science, if the English reader would see the notion explained at large, he may find it in the eighth chapter of the second book of Mr. Locke's Essay on Human Understanding.—O.

PAPER IV.

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The works of nature more pleasant to the imagination than those of art. The works of nature still more pleasant, the more they resemble those of art. The works of art more pleasant, the more they resemble those of nature. Our English plantations and gardens considered in the foregoing light.

"*Alterius sic*
Altera poscit opem res, et conjurat amice.

HOR. ARS POET. v. 410.

"But mutually they need each other's help.—ROSCOMMON.

IF we consider the works of nature and art as they are qualified to entertain the imagination, we shall find the last very defective, in comparison of the former; for though they may sometimes appear as beautiful or strange, they can have nothing in them of that vastness and immensity, which afford so great an entertainment to the mind of the beholder. The one may be as polite and delicate as the other, but can never show herself so august and magnificent in the design. There is something more bold and masterly in the rough careless strokes of nature, than in the nice touches and embellishment of art. The beauties of the most stately garden or palace lie in a narrow compass; the imagination immediately runs them over, and requires something else to gratify her; but in the wide fields of nature, the sight wanders up and down without confinement, and is fed with infinite variety of images, without any certain stint or number. For this reason we always find the poet in love with the country life, where nature ap-

pears in the greatest perfection, and furnishes out all those scenes that are most apt to delight the imagination.

Scriptorum chorus omnis amat nemus, et fugit urbes.

Hor. 2 Ep. ii. 77.

——To grottos and to groves we run.
To ease and silence, every Muse's son.—Pope.

Hic secura quies et nescia fallere vita,
Speluncæ, vivique lacus; hic frigida Tempe,
Dives opum variarum; hic latis otia fundis,
Mugitusque boum, mollesque sub arbore somni.

Virg. Georg. ii. 467.

Here easy quiet, a secure retreat,
A harmless life that knows not how to cheat,
With home-bred plenty the rich owner bless,
And rural pleasures crown his happiness.
Unvex'd with quarrels, undisturb'd with noise,
The country king his peaceful realm enjoys:
Cool grots and living lakes, the flow'ry pride
Of meads, and streams that through the valley glide;
And shady groves that easy sleep invite,
And, after toilsome days, a sweet repose at night.—Dryden.

But though there are several of those wild scenes that are more delightful than any artificial shows, yet we find the works of nature still more pleasant, the more they resemble those of art; for in this case our pleasure rises from a double principle; from the agreeableness of the objects to the eye, and from their similitude to other objects. We are pleased as well with comparing their beauties, as with surveying them, and can represent them to our minds, either as copies or originals. Hence it is that we take delight in a prospect which is well laid out, and

diversified with fields and meadows, woods and rivers; in those accidental landscapes of trees, clouds, and cities, that are sometimes found in the veins of marble; in the curious fret-work of rocks and grottos; and, in a word, in anything that hath such a variety or regularity as may seem the effect of design in what we call the works of chance.

If the products of nature rise in value according as they more or less resemble those of art, we may be sure that artificial works receive a greater advantage from their resemblance of such as are natural; because here the similitude is not only pleasant, but the pattern more perfect. The prettiest landscape I ever saw, was one drawn on the walls of a dark room, which stood opposite on one side to a navigable river, and on the other to a park. The experiment is very common in optics. Here you might discover the waves and fluctuations of the water in strong and proper colours, with the picture of a ship entering at one end, and sailing by degrees through the whole piece. On another there appeared the green shadows of trees, waving to and fro with the wind, and herds of deer among them in miniature, leaping about upon the wall. I must confess the novelty of such a sight may be one occasion of its pleasantness to the imagination; but certainly its chief reason is its nearest resemblance to nature, as it does not only, like other pictures, give the colour and figure, but the motion of the things it represents.

We have before observed, that there is gener-

ally in nature something more grand and august than what we meet with in the curiosities of art. When, therefore, we see this imitated in any measure, it gives us a nobler and more exalted kind of pleasure than what we receive from the nicer and more accurate productions of art. On this account our English gardens are not so entertaining to the fancy as those in France and Italy, where we see a large extent of ground covered over with an agreeable mixture of garden and forest, which represent every where an artificial rudeness, much more charming than that neatness and elegancy which we meet with in those of our own country. It might indeed be of ill consequence to the public, as well as unprofitable to private persons, to alienate so much ground from pasturage and the plough, in many parts of a country that is so well peopled, and cultivated to a far greater advantage. But why may not a whole estate be thrown into a kind of garden by frequent plantations, that may turn as much to the profit as the pleasure of the owner? A marsh overgrown with willows, or a mountain shaded with oaks, are not only more beautiful, but more beneficial, than when they lie bare and unadorned. Fields of corn make a pleasant prospect; and if the walks were a little taken care of that lie between them, if the natural embroidery of the meadows were helped and improved by some small additions of art, and the several rows of hedges set off by trees and flowers that the soil was capable of receiving, a man might make a pretty landscape of his own possessions.

Writers who have given us an account of China, tell us the inhabitants of that country laugh at the plantations of our Europeans, which are laid out by the rule and line; because, they say, any person may place trees in equal rows and uniform figures. They choose rather to show a genius in works of this nature, and therefore always conceal the art by which they direct themselves. They have a word, it seems, in their language, by which they express the particular beauty of a plantation that thus strikes the imagination at first sight, without discovering what it is that has so agreeable an effect. Our British gardeners, on the contrary, instead of humouring nature, love to deviate from it as much as possible. Our trees rise in cones, globes, and pyramids. We see the marks of the scissars upon every plant and bush. I do not know whether I am singular in my opinion, but for my own part, I would rather look upon a tree in all its luxuriancy and diffusion of boughs and branches, than when it is thus cut and trimmed into a mathematical figure; and cannot but fancy that an orchard in flower looks infinitely more delightful than all the little labyrinths of the most finished parterre. But, as our great modellers of gardens have their magazines of plants to dispose of, it is very natural for them to tear up all the beautiful plantations of fruit-trees, and contrive a plan that may most turn to their own profit, in taking off their evergreens, and the like moveable plants, with which their shops are plentifully stocked.—O.

PAPER V.

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Of architecture, as it affects the imagination. Greatness in architecture relates either to the bulk or to the manner. Greatness of bulk in the ancient oriental buildings. The ancient accounts of these buildings confirmed, 1. From the advantages for raising such works, in the first ages of the world, and in eastern climates; 2. From several of them which are still extant. Instances how greatness of manner affects the imagination. A French author's observations on this subject. Why concave and convex figures give a greatness of manner to works of architecture. Every thing that pleases the imagination in architecture, is either great, beautiful, or new.

Adde tot egregias urbes, operumque laborem.

VIRG. GEORG. II. 155.

Witness our cities of illustrious name,
Their costly labour, and stupendous frame.—DRYDEN.

HAVING already shown how the fancy is affected by the works of nature, and afterwards considered in general both the works of nature and of art, how they mutually assist and complete each other in forming such scenes and prospects as are most apt to delight the mind of the beholder, I shall in this paper throw together some reflections on that particular art, which has more immediate tendency, than any other, to produce those primary pleasures of the imagination which have hitherto been the subject of this discourse. The art I mean is that of architecture, which I shall consider only with regard to the light in which the foregoing speculations have placed it, without entering into those rules and maxims which the great masters of architecture have laid down, and explained at large in numberless treatises upon that subject.

Greatness in the works of architecture may be considered as relating to the bulk and body of structure, or to the manner in which it is built. As for the first, we find the ancients, especially among the eastern nations of the world, infinitely superior to the moderns.

Not to mention the tower of Babel, of which an old author says, there were the foundations to be seen in his time, which looked like a spacious mountain; what could be more noble than the walls of Babylon, its hanging gardens, and its temple to Jupiter Belus, that rose a mile high by eight several stories, each story a furlong in height, and on the top of which was the Babylonian observatory? I might here, likewise, take notice of the huge rock that was cut into the figure of Semiramis, with the smaller rocks that lay by it in the shape of tributary kings; the prodigious basin, or artificial lake, which took in the whole Euphrates, till such time as a new canal was formed for its reception, with the several trenches through which that river was conveyed. I know there are persons who look upon some of these wonders of art as fabulous; but I cannot find any grounds for such a suspicion; unless it be that we have no such works among us at present. There were, indeed, many greater advantages for buildings in those times, and in that part of the world, than have been met with ever since. The earth was extremely fruitful; men lived generally on pasturage, which requires a much smaller number of hands than agriculture. There were few trades to employ the busy part of mankind, and fewer arts and sciences to

give work to men of speculative tempers; and, what is more than all the rest, the prince was absolute; so that, when he went to war, he put himself at the head of the whole people; as we find Semiramis leading her three millions to the field, and yet overpowerd by the number of her enemies. It is no wonder, therefore, when she was at peace, and turned her thoughts on building, that she could accomplish such great works, with such a prodigious multitude of labourers: besides that in her climate there was small interruption of frosts and winters, which make the northern workmen lie half a year idle. I might mention, too, among the benefits of the climate, what historians say of the earth, that it sweated out a bitumen, or natural kind of mortar, which is doubtless the same with that mentioned in the holy writ, as contributing to the structure of Babel: "Slime they used instead of mortar."

In Egypt we still see their pyramids, which answer to the descriptions that have been made of them; and I question not but a traveller might find out some remains of the labyrinth that covered a whole province, and had a hundred temples disposed among its several quarters and divisions.

The wall of China is one of these eastern pieces of magnificence, which makes a figure even in the map of the world, although an account of it would have been thought fabulous, were not the wall itself still extant.

We are obliged to devotion for the noblest buildings that have adorned the several countries of the world. It is this which has set men at work on temples and public places of worship,

not only that they might, by the magnificence of of the building, invite the Deity to reside within it, but that such stupendous works might, at the same time, open the mind to vast conceptions, and fit it to converse with the divinity of the place. For every thing that is majestic imprints an awfulness and reverence on the mind of the beholder, and strikes in with the natural greatness of the soul.

In the second place we are to consider greatness of manner in architecture, which has such force upon the imagination, that a small building, where it appears, shall give the mind nobler ideas than one of twenty times the bulk, where the manner is ordinary or little. Thus, perhaps, a man would have been more astonished with the majestic air that appeared in one of Lysippus's statues of Alexander, though no bigger than the life, than he might have been with mount Athos, had it been cut into the figure of the hero, according to the proposal of Phidias, with a river in one hand, and a city in the other.

Let any one reflect on the disposition of mind he finds in himself at his first entrance into the Pantheon at Rome, and how his imagination is filled with something great and amazing; and, at the same time, consider how little, in proportion, he is affected with the inside of a Gothic cathedral, though it be five times larger than the other; which can arise from nothing else but the greatness of the manner in the one, and the meanness in the other.

I have seen an observation upon this subject in a French author, which very much pleased me.

It is in Monsieur Freart's Parallel of the ancient and modern Architecture. I shall give it the reader with the same terms of art which he has made use of. "I am observing," says he, "a thing which, in my opinion, is very curious, whence it proceeds, that in the same quantity of superficies, the one manner seems great and magnificent, and the other poor and trifling; the reason is fine and uncommon. I say, then, that to introduce into architecture this grandeur of manner, we ought so to proceed, that the division of the principal members of the order may consist but of few parts, that they be all great, and of a bold and ample relievo, and swelling: and that the eye beholding nothing little and mean, the imagination may be more vigorously touched and affected with the work that stands before it. For example: in a cornice, if the gola or cymatium of the corona, the coping, the modillions or dentilli, make a noble show by their graceful projections, if we see none of that ordinary confusion which is the result of those little cavities, quarter rounds of the astragal, and I know not how many other intermingled particulars, which produce no effect in great and massy works, and which very unprofitably take up place to the prejudice of the principal member, it is more certain that this manner will appear solemn and great; as, on the contrary, that it will have but a poor and mean effect, where there is a redundancy of those smaller ornaments, which divide and scatter the angles of the sight into such a multitude of rays, so pressed together that the whole will appear but a confusion."

Among all the figures in architecture, there are none that have a greater air than the concave and the convex; and we find in the ancient and modern architecture, as well in the remote parts of China, as in countries nearer home, that round pillars and vaulted roofs make a great part of those buildings which are designed for pomp and magnificence. The reason I take to be, because in these figures we generally see more of the body than in those of other kinds. There are, indeed, figures of bodies, where the eye may take in two-thirds of the surface; but, as in such bodies, the sight must split upon several angles, it does not take in one uniform idea, but several ideas of the same kind. Look upon the outside of a dome, your eye half surrounds it; look upon the inside, and at one glance you have all the prospect of it; the entire concavity falls into your eye at once, the sight being as the centre that collects and gathers into it the lines of the whole circumference: in a square pillar, the sight often takes in but a fourth part of the surface; and in a square concave must move up and down to the different sides, before it is master of all the inward surface. For this reason, the fancy is infinitely more struck with the view of the open air and skies, that passes through an arch, than what comes through a square, or any other figure. The figure of the rainbow does not contribute less to its magnificence than the colours to its beauty, as it is very poetically described by the son of Sirach: "Look upon the rainbow, and praise Him that made it: very beautiful is it in its brightness; it encom-

passes the heavens with a glorious circle, and the hands of the Most High have bended it."

Having thus spoken of that greatness which affects the mind in architecture, I might next show the pleasure that arises in the imagination from what appears new and beautiful in this art; but as every beholder has naturally a greater taste of these two perfections in every building which offers itself to his view, than of that which I have hitherto considered, I shall not trouble my readers with any reflections upon it. It is sufficient for my present purpose to observe, that there is nothing in this whole art which pleases the imagination, but as it is great, uncommon, or beautiful.—O.

PAPER VI.

CONTENTS.

The secondary pleasures of the imagination. The several sources of the pleasures (statuary, painting, description, and music) compared together. The final cause of our receiving pleasure from these several sources. Of descriptions in particular. The power of words over the imagination. Why one reader is more pleased with descriptions than another.

Quatenus hoc simile est oculis, quod mente videmus.

LUCR. IX. 754.

So far as what we see with our minds, bears similitude to what we see with our eyes.

I AT first divided the pleasures of the imagination into such as arise from objects that are actually before our eyes, or that once entered in at our eyes, and are afterwards called up into the mind either barely by its own operations, or on occasion of something without us, as statues or des-

criptions. We have already considered the first division, and shall therefore enter on the other, which, for distinction sake, I have called "The Secondary Pleasures of the Imagination." When I say the ideas we receive from statues, descriptions, or such-like occasions, are the same that were once actually in our view, it must not be understood that we had once seen the very place, action, or person, that are carved or described. It is sufficient that we have seen places, persons, or actions in general, which bear a resemblance, or at lest some remote analogy, with what we find represented; since it is in the power of the imagination, when it is once stocked with particular ideas, to enlarge, compound, and vary them at her own pleasure.

Among the different kinds of representation, statuary is the most natural, and shows us something *likest* the object that is represented. To make use of a common instance: let one who is born blind take an image in his hands, and trace out with his fingers the different furrows and impressions of the chisel, and he will easily conceive how the shape of a man, or beast, may be represented by it; but should he draw his hand over a picture, where all is smooth and uniform, he would never be able to imagine how the several prominences and depressions of a human body should be shown on a plain piece of canvass, that has in it no unevenness or irregularity. Description runs yet further from the things it represents than painting; for a picture bears a real resemblance to its original, which letters and syllables are wholly void of. Colours speak

all languages, but words are understood only by such a people or nation. For this reason, though men's necessities quickly put them on finding out speech, writing is probably of a later invention than painting; particularly we are told that in America, when the Spaniards first arrived there, expresses were sent to the Emperor of Mexico in paint, and the news of his country delineated by the strokes of a pencil, which was a more natural way than that of writing, though at the same time much more imperfect, because it is impossible to draw the little connexions of speech, or to give the picture of a conjunction or an adverb. It would be yet more strange to represent visible objects by sounds that have no ideas annexed to them, and to make something like description in music. Yet it is certain, there may be confused imperfect notions of this nature raised in the imagination by an artificial composition of notes; and we find that great masters in the art are able, sometimes to set their hearers in the heat and hurry of a battle, to overcast their minds with melancholy scenes and apprehensions of deaths and funerals, or to lull them into pleasing dreams of groves and elysiums.

In all these instances, this secondary pleasure of the imagination proceeds from that action of the mind which compares the ideas arising from the original objects with the ideas we received from the statue, picture, description, or sound, that represents them, It is impossible for us to give the necessary reason why this operation of the mind is attended with so much pleasure, as I have before observed on the same occasion; but

we find a great variety of entertainments derived from this single principle; for it is this that not only gives us a relish of statuary, painting, and description, but makes us delight in all the actions and arts of mimicry. It is this that makes the several kinds of wit pleasant, which consists, as I have formerly shown, in the affinity of ideas; and we may add, it is this also that raises the little satisfaction we sometimes find in the different sorts of false wit; whether it consists in the affinity of letters, as an anagram, acrostic; or of syllables, as in doggrel rhymes, echoes; or of words, as in puns, quibbles; or of a whole sentence or poem, as wings and altars. The final cause, probably, of annexing pleasure to this operation of the mind, was to quicken and encourage us in our searches after truth, since the distinguishing one thing from another, and the the right discerning betwixt our ideas, depend wholly upon our comparing them together, and observing the congruity or disagreement that appears among the several works of nature.

But I shall here confine myself to those pleasures of the imagination which proceed from ideas raised by words, because most of the observations that agree with descriptions are equally applicable to painting and statuary.

Words, when well chosen, have so great a force in them, that a description often gives us more lively ideas than the sight of things themselves. The reader finds a scene drawn in stronger colours, and painted more to the life in his imagination, by the help of words, than by an actual survey of the scene which they describe.

In this case, the poet seems to get the better of nature: he takes, indeed, the landscape after her; but gives it more vigorous touches, heightens its beauty, and so enlivens the whole piece, that the images which flow from the objects themselves appear weak and faint, in comparison of those that come from the expressions. The reason, probably, may be, because, in the survey of any object, we have only so much of it painted on the imagination as comes in at the eye; but in its description, the poet gives us as free a view of it as he pleases, and discovers to us several parts, that either we did not attend to, or that lay out of our sight when we first beheld it. As we look on any object, our idea of it is, perhaps, made up of two or three simple ideas; but when the poet represents it, he may either give us a more complex idea of it, or only raise in us such ideas as are most apt to affect the imagination.

It may be here worth our while to examine how it comes to pass that several readers, who are all acquainted with the same language, and know the meaning of the words they read, should nevertheless have a different relish of the same descriptions. We find one transported with a passage, which another runs over with coldness and indifference; or finding the representation extremely natural, where another can perceive nothing of likeness and conformity. This different taste must proceed either from the perfection of imagination in one more than in another, or from the different ideas that several readers affix to the same words. For, to have a true relish

and form a right judgment of a description, a man should be born with a good imagination, and must have well weighed the force and energy that lie in the several words of a language, so as to be able to distinguish which are most significant and expressive of their proper ideas, and what additional strength and beauty they are capable of receiving from conjunction with others. The fancy must be warm, to retain the print of those images it hath received from outward objects, and the judgment discerning, to know what expressions are most proper to clothe and adorn them to the best advantage. A man who is deficient in either of these respects, though he may receive the general notion of a description, can never see distinctly all its particular beauties; as a person with a weak sight may have the confused prospect of a place that lies before him, without entering into its several parts, or discerning the variety of its colours in their full glory and perfection —O.

PAPER VII.

CONTENTS.

How a whole set of ideas hang together, &c. A natural cause assigned for it. How to perfect the imagination of a writer. Who among the ancient poets had this faculty in its greatest perfection. Homer excelled in imagining what is great; Virgil in imagining what is beautiful; Ovid in imagining what is new. Our countryman, Milton, very perfect in all these three respects.

Quem tu, Melpomene, semel
Nascentem placido lumine videris,
Non illum labor Isthmius
Clarabit pugilem, non equus impiger, &c.
Sed quæ Tibur aquæ fertile perfluunt,
Et spissæ nemorum comæ,
Fingent Æolio carmine nobilem.—HOR. 4 OD. III, 1.

He on whose birth the lyric queen
Of numbers smil'd, shall never grace
The Isthmian gauntlet, or be seen
First in the fam'd Olympic race.
But him the streams that warbling flow
Rich Tibur's fertile meads along,
And shady groves, his haunts shall know
The master of th' Æolian song.—ATTERBURY.

We may observe, that any single circumstance of what we have formerly seen often raises up a whole scene of imagery, and awakens numberless ideas that before slept in the imagination; such a particular smell or colour is able to fill the mind, on a sudden, with the picture of the fields or gardens where we first met with it, and to bring up into view all the variety of images that once attended it. Our imagination takes the hint, and leads us unexpectedly into cities or theatres, plains or meadows. We may further observe, when the fancy thus reflects on the scenes that have passed in it formerly, those which were at first pleasant to behold appear

more so upon reflection, and that the memory heightens the delightfulness of the original. A Cartesian would account for both these instances in the following manner:—

The set of ideas which we received from such a prospect or garden, having entered the mind at the same time, have a set of traces, belonging to them in the brain, bordering very near upon one another; when, therefore, any one of these ideas arises in the imagination, and consequently despatches a flow of animal spirits to its proper trace, these spirits, in the violence of their motion, run not only into the trace to which they were more particularly directed, but into several of those that lie about it. By this means, they awaken other ideas of the same set, which immediately determine a new despatch of spirits, that in the same manner open other neighbouring traces, till at last the whole set of them is blown up, and the whole prospect or garden flourishes in the imagination. But because the pleasure we receive from these places far surmounted and overcame the little disagreeableness we found in them, for this reason there was at first a wider passage worn in the pleasure traces, and, on the contrary, so narrow a one in those which belonged to the disagreeable ideas, that they were quickly stopped up, and rendered incapable of receiving any animal spirits, and consequently of exciting any unpleasant ideas in the memory.

It would be in vain to inquire whether the power of imagining things strongly proceeds from any greater perfection in the soul, or from

any nicer texture in the brain of one man than of another. But this is certain, that a noble writer should be born with this faculty in its full strength and vigour, so as to be able to receive lively ideas from outward objects, to retain them long, and to range them together upon occasion, in such figures and representations, as are most likely to hit the fancy of the reader. A poet should take as much pains in forming his imagination, as a philosopher in cultivating his understanding. He must gain a due relish of the works of nature, and be thoroughly conversant in the various scenery of a country life.

When he is stored with country images if he would go beyond pastoral, and the lower kinds of poetry, he ought to acquaint himself with the pomp and magnificence of courts. He should be very well versed in every thing that is noble and stately in the productions of art, whether it appear in painting or statuary; in the great works of architecture which are in their present glory, or in the ruins of those which flourished in former ages.

Such advantages as these help to open a man's thoughts, and to enlarge his imagination, and will therefore have their influence on all kinds of writing, if the author knows how to make right use of them. And among those of the learned languages who excel in this talent, the most perfect in their several kinds are perhaps Homer, Virgil, and Ovid. The first strikes the imagination wonderfully with what is great, the second with what is beautiful, and the last with what is strange. Reading the Iliad, is like tra-

velling through a country uninhabited, where the fancy is entertained with a thousand savage prospects of vast deserts, wide uncultivated marshes, huge forests, misshapen rocks and precipices. On the contrary, the Æneid is like a well-ordered garden, where it is impossible to find out any part unadorned, or to cast our eyes upon a single spot that does not produce some beautiful plant or flower. But when we are in the Metamorphoses, we are walking on enchanted ground, and see nothing but scenes of magic lying around us.

Homer is in his province, when he is describing a battle or a multitude, a hero or a god. Virgil is never better pleased than when he is in his elysium, or copying out an entertaining picture. Homer's epithets generally mark out what is great; Virgil's what is agreeable. Nothing can be more magnificent than the figure Jupiter makes in the first Iliad, nor more charming than that of Venus in the first Æneid.

He spoke, and awful bends his sable brows
Shakes his ambrosial curls, and gives the nod
The stamp of fate, and sanction of the god;
High heav'n with trembling the dread signal took,
And all Olympus to the centre shook—POPE.

Dixit; et averteus rosea cervice refulsit,
Ambrosiæque comæ divinum vertice odorem
Spiravere; pedes vestis defluxit ad imos,
Et vera incessu patuit dea.————VIRG. ÆN. I, 406.

Thus having said, she turn'd and made appear
Her neck refulgent, and dishevel'd hair;
Which, flowing from her shoulders, reach'd the ground,
And widely spread ambrosial scents around:
In length of train descends her sweeping gown,
And by her graceful walk the queen of love is known.

DRYDEN.

Homer's persons are most of them godlike and terrible; Virgil has scarce admitted any into his poem who are not beautiful, and has taken particular care to make his hero so.

> ——————Lumenque juventæ
> Purpureum, et lætos oculis afflârat honores.
>
> VIRG. ÆN. I, 594.

> And gave his rolling eyes a sparking grace,
> And breath'd a youthful vigour on his face.—DRYDEN.

In a word, Homer fills his readers with sublime ideas, and, I believe, has raised the imagination of all the good poets that have come after him. I shall only instance Horace, who immediately takes fire at the first hint of any passage in the Iliad or Odyssey, and always rises above himself when he has Homer in his view. Virgil has drawn together, into his Æneid, all the pleasing scenes his subject is capable of admitting, and in his Georgics has given us a collection of the most delightful landscapes that can be made out of fields and woods, herds of cattle, and swarms of bees.

Ovid, in his Metamorphoses, has shown us how the imagination may be affected by what is strange. He describes a miracle in every story, and always gives us the sight of some new creature at the end of it. His art consists chiefly in well-timing his description, before the first shape is quite worn off, and the new one perfectly finished; so that he every-where entertains us with something we never saw before, and shows us monster after monster to the end of the Metamorphoses.

If I were to name a poet that is a perfect master in all these arts of working on the imagination, I think Milton may pass for one; and if his Paradise Lost falls short of the Æneid or Iliad in this respect, it proceeds rather from the fault of the language in which it is written, than from any defect of genius in the author. So divine a poem in English is like a stately palace built of brick, where one may see architecture in as great a perfection as one of marble, though the materials are of a coarser nature. But to consider it only as it regards our present subject, What can be conceived greater than the battle of angels, the majesty of Messiah, the stature and behaviour of Satan and his peers? What more beautiful than Pandæmonium, Paradise, Heaven, Angels, Adam, and Eve? What more strange than the creation of the world, the several metamorphoses of the fallen angels, and the surprising adventures their leader meets with in his search after Paradise? No other subject could have furnished a poet with scenes so proper to strike the imagination, as no other poet conld have painted those scenes in more strong and lively colours.—O

PAPER VIII.

CONTENTS.

Why any thing that is unpleasant to behold, pleases the imagination when well described. Why the imagination receives a more exquisite pleasure from the description of what is great, new, or beautiful. The pleasure still heightened, if what is described raises passion in the mind. Disagreeable passions pleasing when raised by apt descriptions. Why terror and grief are pleasing to the mind when excited by description. A particular advantage the writers in poetry and fiction have to please the imagination. What liberties are allowed them.

——*ferat et rubus asper amomum*—VIRG. ECL. III, 89.

The rugged thorn shall bear the fragrant rose.

THE pleasures of these secondary views of the imagination are of a wider and more universal nature than those it has when joined with sight; for not only what is great, strange or beautiful, but any thing that is disagreeable when looked upon, pleases us in an apt description. Here, therefore, we must inquire after a new principle of pleasure, which is nothing else but the action of the mind, which compares the ideas that arise from words with the ideas that arise from the objects themselves; and why this operation of the mind is attended with so much pleasure, we have before considered. For this reason therefore, the description of a dunghill is pleasing to the imagination, if the image be represented to our minds by suitable expressions; though, perhaps, this may be more properly called the pleasure of the understanding than of the fancy, because we are not so much delighted with the image that is contained in the description, as with the aptness of the description to excite the image.

But if the description of what is little, common, or deformed, be acceptable to the imagination, the description of what is great, surprising, or beautiful, is much more so; because here we are not only delighted with comparing the representation with the original, but are highly pleased with the original itself. Most readers, I believe, are more charmed with Milton's description of paradise, than of hell: they are both, perhaps, equally perfect in their kind: but in the one the brimstone and sulphur are not so refreshing to the imagination, as the beds of flowers and the wilderness of sweets in the other.

There is yet another circumstance which recommends a description more than all the rest; and that is, if it represents to us such objects as are apt to raise a secret ferment in the mind of the reader, and to work with violence upon his passions. For, in this case, we are at once warned and enlightened, so that the pleasure becomes more universal, and is several ways qualified to entertain us. Thus in painting, it is pleasant to look on the picture of any face where the resemblance is hit; but the pleasure increases if it be the picture of a face that is beautiful; and is still greater, if the beauty be softened with an air of melancholy or sorrow. The two leading passions which the more serious parts of poetry endeavour to stir up in us are terror and pity. And here, by the way, one would wonder how it comes to pass that such passions as are very unpleasant at all other times, are very agreeable when excited by proper descriptions. It is not strange that we should take delight in such passages as are apt

to produce hope, joy, admiration, love, or the like emotions, in us, because they never rise in the mind without an inward pleasure which attends them. But how comes it to pass, that we should take delight in being terrified or dejected, by a description, when we find so much uneasiness in the fear or grief which we receive from any other occasion?

If we consider, therefore, the nature of this pleasure, we shall find that it does not arise so properly from the description of what is terrible, as from the reflection we make on ourselves at the time of reading it. When we look on such hideous objects, we are not a little pleased to think we are in no danger of them. We consider them, at the same time, as dreadful and harmless, so that, the more frightful appearance they make, the greater is the pleasure we receive from the sense of our own safety. In short, we look upon the terrors of a description with the same curiosity and satisfaction that we survey a dead monster.

——————informe cadavc
Protrahitur: nequeunt expleri corda tuendo
Terribiles oculos, vultum, villosaque setis
Pectori semiferi, atque extinctos sanguine ignes

VIRG. ÆN. VIII. 264.

They drag him from his den.
The wond'ring neighbourhood, with glad surprise,
Behold his shagged breast, his giant size,
His mouth that flames no more, and his extinguish'd eyes.

DRYDEN.

It is for the same reason that we are delighted with the reflecting upon dangers that are past, or

in looking on a precipice at a distance, which would fill us with a different kind of horror if we saw it hanging over our heads.

In the like manner, when we read of torments, wounds, deaths, and the like dismal accidents, our pleasure does not flow so properly from the grief which such melancholy descriptions give us, as from the secret comparison which we make between ourselves and the person who suffers. Such representations teach us to set a just value upon our own condition, and make us prize our good fortune which exempts us from the like calamities. This is, however, such a kind pleasure as we are not capable of receiving, when we see a person actually lying under the tortures that we meet with in a description; because, in this case, the object presses too close upon our senses, and bears so hard upon us, that it does not give us time or leisure to reflect on ourselves. Our thoughts are so intent upon the miseries of the sufferer, that we cannot turn them upon our own happiness. Whereas, on the contrary, we consider the misfortunes we read in history or poetry, either as past or as fictitious; so that the reflection upon ourselves rises in us insensibly, and overbears the sorrow we conceive for the sufferings of the afflicted.

But because the mind of man requires something more perfect in matter than what it finds there, and can never meet with any sight in nature which sufficiently answers its highest ideas of pleasantness; or, in other words, because the imagination can fancy to itself things more great, strange, or beautiful, than the eye ever

saw, and is still sensible of some defect in what it has seen; on this account it is the part of a poet to humour the imagination in our own notions, by mending and perfecting nature where he describes a reality, and by adding greater beauties than are put together in nature, where he describes a fiction.

He is not obliged to attend her in the slow advances which she makes from one season to another, or to observe her conduct in the successive production of plants and flowers. He may draw into his description all the beauties of the spring and autumn, and make the whole year contribute something to render it the more agreeable. His rose-trees, woodbines, and jessamines, may flower together, and his beds be covered at the same time with lilies, violets, and amaranths. His soil is not restrained to any particular set of plants, but is proper either for oaks or myrtles, and adapts itself to the products of every climate. Oranges may grow wild in it; myrrh may be met with in every hedge; and if he thinks it proper to have a grove of spices, he can quickly command sun enough to raise it. If all this will not furnish out an agreeable scene, he can make several new species of flowers, with richer scents and higher colours than any that grow in the gardens of nature. His concerts of birds may be as full and harmonious and his woods as thick and gloomy as he pleases. He is at no more expense in a long vista than a short one, and can as easily throw his cascades from a precipice of half a mile high, as from one of twenty yards. He has his choice

of the winds, and can turn the course of his rivers in all the variety of meanders that are most delightful to the reader's imagination. In a word, he has the modelling of Nature in his own hands, and may give her what charms he pleases, provided he does not reform her too much, and run into absurdities by endeavouring to excel.—O.

PAPER IX.

CONTENTS.

Of that kind of poetry which Mr. Dryden calls "the fairy way of writing." How a poet should be qualified for it. The pleasures of the imagination that arise from it. In this respect why the moderns excel the ancients. Why the English excel the moderns. Who the best among the English. Of emblematical persons.

-mentis gratissimus error.—HOR. 2 EP. II. 140.

The sweet delusion of a raptur'd mind.

THERE is a kind of writing, wherein the poet quite loses sight of nature, and entertains his reader's imagination with the characters and actions of such persons as have many of them no existence but what he bestows on them. Such are fairies, witches, magicians, demons, and departed spirits. This Mr. Dryden calls "the fairy way of writing," which is indeed more difficult than any other that depends on the poet's fancy, because he has no pattern to follow in it, and must work altogether out of his own invention.

There is a very odd turn of thought required for this sort of writing; and it is impossible for a poet to succeed in it, who has not a particular cast of fancy, and an imagination naturally fruit-

ful and superstitious. Besides this, he ought to be very well versed in legends and fables, antiquated romances, and the traditions of nurses and old women, that he may fall in with our natural prejudices, and humour those notions which we have imbibed in our infancy. For otherwise he will be apt to make his fairies talk like people of his own species, and not like other sets of beings, who converse with different objects, and think in a different manner from that of mankind.

> Sylvis deducti cavcant, me judice, fauni,
> Ne velut innati triviis, ac pene, forenses,
> Aut nimium teneris juvenentur versibus———

HOR. ARS. POET. v. 244.

> Let not the wood-born satyr fondly sport
> With am'rous verses, as if bred at court.—FRANCIS.

I do not say with Mr. Bays in the Rehearsal, that spirits must not be confined to speak sense; but it is certain their sense ought to be a little discoloured, that it may seen particular, and proper to the person and condition of the speaker.

These descriptions raise a pleasing kind of horror in the mind of the reader, and amuse his imagination with the strangeness and novelty of the persons who are represented in them. They bring up into our memory the stories we have heard in our childhood, and favour those secret terrors and apprehensions to which the mind of man is naturally subject. We are pleased with surveying the different habits and behaviours of foreign countries; how much more must we be delighted and surprised when we are led, as it were, into a new creation, and see the persons

and manners of another species! Men of cold fancies and philosophical dispositions, object to this kind of poetry, that it has not probability enough to effect the imagination. But to this it may be answered, that we are sure in general there are many intellectual beings in the world besides ourselves, and several species of spirits who are subject to different laws and economies from those of mankind: when we see, therefore any of those represented naturally we cannot look upon the representation as altogether impossible, nay, many are prepossessed with such false opinions, as dispose them to believe these particular delusions; at least we have all heard so many pleasing relations in favour of them that we do not care for seeing through the falsehood, and willingly give ourselves up to so agreeable an imposture.

The ancients have not much of this poetry among them; for, indeed, almost the whole substance of it owes its original to the darkness and superstition of later ages, when pious frauds were made use of to amuse mankind, and frighten them into a sense of their duty. Our forefathers looked upon nature with more reverence and horror, before the world was enlightened by learning and philosophy; and loved to astonish themselves with the apprehensions of witchcraft, prodigies, charms, and enchantments. There was not a village in England that had not a ghost in it; the churchyards were all haunted; every large common had a circle of fairies belonging to it; and there was scarce a shepherd to be met with who had not seen a spirit.

Among all the poets of this kind our English are much the best, by what I have yet seen; whether it be that we abound with more stories of this nature, or that the genius of our country is fitter for this sort of poetry. For the English are naturally fanciful, and very often disposed, by that gloominess and melancholy of temper, which is so frequent in our nation, to many wild notions and visions, to which others are not so liable.

Among the English, Shakspeare has incomparably excelled all others. That noble extravagance of fancy, which he had in so great perfection, thoroughly qualified him to touch this weak superstitious part of his reader's imagination; and made him capable of succeeding, where he had nothing to support him beside the strength of his own genius. There is something so wild, and yet so solemn, in the speeches of his ghosts, faires, witches, and the like imaginary persons, that we cannot forbear thinking them natural, though we have no rule by which to judge of them, and must confess, if there are such beings in the world, it looks highly probable they should talk and act as he has represented them.

There is another sort of imaginary beings, that we sometimes meet with among the poets, when the author represents any passion, appetite, virtue, or vice, under a visible shape, and makes it a person or an actor in his poem. Of this nature are the descriptions of Hunger and Envy in Ovid, of Fame in Virgil, and of Sin and Death in Milton. We find a whole creation of the like shadowy persons in Spenser, who had

an admirable talent in representations of this kind. I have discoursed of these emblematical persons in former papers, and shall therefore only mention them in this place. Thus we see how many ways poetry addresses itself to the imagination, as it has not only the whole circle of nature for its province, but makes new worlds of its own, shows us persons who are not to be found in being, and represents even the faculties of the soul, with several virtues and vices, in a sensible shape and character.

I shall, in my two following papers, consider, in general, how other kinds of writing are qualified to please the imagination; with which I intend to conclude this essay.—O.

PAPER X.

CONTENTS.

What authors please the imagination. Who have nothing to do with fiction. How history pleases the imagination. How the authors of the new philosophy please the imagination. The bounds and defects of the imagination. Whether these defects are essential to the imagination.

———*Quocunque volent, animum auditoris agunto.*

HOR. ARS. POET. v. 100.

And raise men's passions to what height they will.

ROSCOMMON.

As the writers in poetry and fiction borrow their several materials from outward objects, and join them together at their own pleasure, there are others who are obliged to follow nature more closely, and to take entire scenes out of her.

Such are historians, natural philosophers, travellers, geographers, and, in a word, all who describe visible objects of a real existence.

It is the most agreeable talent of an historian to be able to draw up his armies and fight his battles in proper expressions, to set before our eyes the divisions, cabals, and jealousies of great men, to lead us step by step into the several actions and events of his history. We love to see the subject unfolding itself by just degrees, and breaking upon us insensibly, that so we may be kept in a pleasing suspense, and have time given us to raise our expectations, and to side with one of the parties concerned in the relation. I confess this shows more the art than the veracity of the historian; but I am only to speak of him as he is qualified to please the imagination, and in this respect Livy has, perhaps, excelled all who ever went before him or have written since his time. He describes every thing in so lively a manner, that his whole history is an admirable picture, and touches on such proper circumstances in every story, that his reader becomes a kind of Spectator, and feels in himself all the variety of passions which are correspondent to the several parts of the relation.

But among this set of writers there are none who more gratify and enlarge the imagination than the authors of the new philosophy, whether we consider their theories of the earth or heavens, the discoveries they have made by glasses, or any other of their contemplations on nature. We are not a little pleased to find every green leaf swarm with millions of animals, that at their

largest growth, are not visible to the naked eye. There is something very engaging to the fancy, as well as to our reason, in the treatises of metals, minerals, plants, and meteors. But when we survey the whole earth at once, and the several planets that lie within its neighbourhood; we are filled with a pleasing astonishment, to see so many worlds, hanging one above another, and sliding round their axles in such an amazing pomp and solemnity. If, after this, we contemplate those wild fields of ether, that reach in height as far as from Saturn to the fixed stars, and run abroad almost to an infinitude, our imagination finds its capacity filled with so immense a prospect, and puts itself upon the stretch to comprehend it. But if we yet rise higher, and consider the fixed stars as so many vast oceans of flame, that are each of them attended with a different set of planets, and still discover new firmaments and new lights that are sunk further into those unfathomable depths of ether, so as not to be seen by the strongest of our telescopes, we are lost in such a labyrinth of suns and worlds, and confounded with the immensity and magnificence of nature.

Nothing is more pleasant to the fancy, than to enlarge itself by degrees, in its contemplation of the various proportions which its several objects bear to each other, when it compares the body of man to the bulk of the whole earth, the earth to the circle it describes round the sun, that circle to the sphere of the fixed stars, the sphere of the fixed stars to the circuit of the whole creation, the whole creation itself to the infinite space

that is every where diffused about it; or when the imagination works downward, and considers the bulk of a human body, in respect of an animal a hundred times less than a mite, the particular limbs of such an animal, the different springs that actuate the limbs, the spirits which set the springs a going, and the proportionable minuteness of these several parts, before they have arrived at their full growth and perfection; but if, after all this, we taken the least particle of these animal spirits, and consider its capacity of being wrought into a world that shall contain within those narrow dimensions a heaven and earth, stars and planets, and every different species of living creatures, in the same analogy and proportion they bear to each other in our own universe; such a speculation, by reason of its nicety, appears ridiculous to those who have not turned their thoughts that way, though at the same time it is founded on no less than the evidence of a demonstration. Nay, we may yet carry it further and discover in the smallest particle of this little world a new unexhausted fund of matter, capable of being spun out into another universe.

I have dwelt the longer on this subject, because I think it may show us the proper limits, as well as the defectiveness of our imagination; how it is confined to a very small quantity of space, and immediately stopped in its operation, when it endeavours to take in any thing that is very great or very little. Let a man try to conceive the different bulk of an animal, which is twenty, from another which is a hundred times less than a mite, or to compare in his thoughts

a length of a thousand diameters of the earth, with that of a million; and he will quickly find that he has no different measures in his mind, adjusted to such extraordinary degrees of grandeur or minuteness. The understanding, indeed, opens an infinite space on every side of us; but the imagination, after a few faint efforts, is immediately at a stand, and finds herself swallowed up in the immensity of the void that surrounds it; our reason can pursue a particle of matter through an infinite variety of divisions; but the fancy soon loses sight of it, and feels in itself a kind of chasm, that wants to be filled with matter of a more sensible bulk. We can neither widen nor contract the faculty to the dimensions of either extreme. The object is too big for our capacity, when we would comprehend the circumference of a world; and dwindles into nothing when we endeavour after the idea of an atom.

It is possible this defect of imagination may not be in the soul itself, but as it acts in conjunction with the body. Perhaps there may not be room in the brain for such a variety of impressions, or the animal spirits may be incapable of figuring them in such a manner as is necessary to excite so very large or very minute ideas. However it be, we may well suppose that beings of a higher nature very much excel us in this respect, as it is probable the soul of man will be infinitely more perfect hereafter in this faculty as well as in all the rest; insomuch that, perhaps the imagination will be able to keep pace with the understanding, and to form in itself distinct ideas of all the different modes and quantities of space.—O.

PAPER XI.

How those please the imagination who treat of subjects abstracted from matter, by allusions taken from it. What allusions most pleasing to the imagination. Great writers, how faulty in this respect. Of the art of imagining in general. The imagination capable of pain as well as pleasure. In what degree the imagination is capable either of pain or pleasure.

Ignotis errare locis, ignota videre
Flumina gaudebat; studio minuente laborem

OVID, MET. VI. 294.

He sought fresh fountains in a foreign soil:
The pleasure lessen'd the attending toil.—ADDISON.

THE pleasures of the imagination are not wholly confined to such particular authors as are conversant in material objects, but are often to be met with among the polite masters of morality, criticism, and other speculations abstracted from matter, who, though they do not directly treat of the visible parts of nature, often draw from them their similitudes, metaphors, and allegories. By these allusions, a truth in the understanding is, as it were, reflected by the imagination; we are able to see something like colour and shape in a notion, and to discover a scheme of thoughts traced out upon matter. And here the mind receives a great deal of satisfaction, and has two of its faculties gratified at the same time, while the fancy is busy in copying after the understanding, and transcribing ideas out of the intellectual world into the material.

The great art of a writer shows itself in the choice of pleasing allusions, which are generally

to be taken from the great or beautiful works of art or nature; for, though whatever is new or uncommon is apt to delight the imagination, the chief design of an allusion being to illustrate and explain the passages of an author, it should be always borrowed from what is more known and common than the passages which are to be explained.

Allegories, when well chosen, are like so many tracks of light in a discourse, that make every thing about them clear and beautiful. A noble metaphor, when it is placed to an advantage, casts a kind of glory round it, and darts a lustre through a whole sentence. These different kinds of allusion are but so many different manners of similitude; and that they may please the imagination, the likeness ought to be very exact or very agreeable, as we love to see a picture where the resemblance is just, or the posture and air graceful. But we often find eminent writers very faulty in this respect, great scholars are apt to fetch their comparisons and allusions from the sciences in which they are most conversant, so that a man may see the compass of their learning in a treatise on the most indifferent subject. I have read a discourse upon love, which none but a profound chemist could understand, and have heard many a sermon that should only have been preached before a congregation of Cartesians. On the contrary, your men of business usually have recourse to such instances as are too mean and familiar. They are for drawing the reader into a game of chess or tennis, or for leading him from shop to shop, in the cant of

particular trades and employments. It is certain, there may be found an infinite variety of very agreeable allusions in both these kinds; but, for the generality, the most entertaining ones lie in the works of nature, which are obvious to all capacities, and more delightful than what is to be found in arts and sciences.

It is this talent of affecting the imagination that gives an embellishment to good sense, and makes one man's compositions more agreeable than another's. It sets off all writings in general, but is the very life and highest perfection of poetry. Where it shines in an eminent degree, it has preserved several poems for many ages that have nothing else to recommend them; and where all the other beauties are present, the work appears dry and insipid, if this single one be wanting. It has something in it like creation. It bestows a kind of existence, and draws up to the reader's view several objects which are not to be found in being. It makes additions to nature, and gives a greater variety to God's works. In a word, it is able to beautify and adorn the most illustrious scenes in the universe, or to fill the mind with more glorious shows and apparitions than can be found in any part of it.

We have now discovered the several originals of those pleasures that gratify the fancy; and here, perhaps, it would not be very difficult to cast under their proper heads those contrary objects, which are apt to fill it with distaste and terror; for the imagination is as liable to pain as pleasure. When the brain is hurt by any accident, or the mind disordered by dreams or

sickness, the fancy is overrun with wild dismal ideas, and terrified with a thousand hideous monsters of its own framing.

> Eumenidum veluti demens videt agmina Pentheus,
> Et solem geminum, et duplices se ostendere Thebas:
> Aut Agamemnonius scenis agitatus Orestes,
> Armatam facibus matrem et serpentibus atris
> Cum fugit, ultricesque sedent in limine Dirae.
>
> VIRG ÆN. IV. 469.

> Like Pentheus, when distracted with his fear,
> He saw two suns, and double Thebes, appear;
> Or mad Orestes, when his mother's ghost
> Full in his face infernal torches tost,
> And shook her snaky locks: he shuns the sight
> Flies o'er the stage, surpris'd with mortal fright,
> The Furies guard the door, and intercept his flight.
>
> DRYDEN.

There is not a sight in nature so mortifying as that of a distracted person, when his imagination is troubled, and his whole soul disordered and confused. Babylon in ruins is not so melancholy a spectacle. But to quit so disagreeable a subject, I shall only consider, by way of conclusion, what an infinite advantage this faculty gives an Almighty Being over the soul of man, and how great a measure of happiness or misery we are capable of receiving from the imagination only.

We have already seen the influence that one man has over the fancy of another, and with what ease he conveys into it a variety of imagery, how great a power then may we suppose lodged in him, who knows all the ways of affecting the imagination, who can infuse what ideas he pleases, and fill those ideas with terror and delight to

what degree he thinks fit! He can excite images in the mind without the help of words, and make scenes rise up before us, and seem present to the eye, without the assistance of bodies or exterior objects. He can transport the imagination with such beautiful and glorious visions as cannot possibly enter into our present conceptions, or haunt it with such ghastly spectres and apparitions as would make us hope for annihilation, and think existence no better than a curse. In short, he can so exquisitely ravish or torture the soul through this single faculty, as might suffice to make up the whole heaven or hell of any finite being.

SPECTATOR.

CRITICISM ON MILTON'S PARADISE LOST.

Cedite Romani scriptores, cedite Graii.

PROPERT. EL. 34. LIB. 2. VER. 95.

Give place, ye Roman and ye Grecian wits.

THERE is nothing in nature so irksome as general discourses, especially when they turn chiefly upon words. For this reason I shall wave the discussion of that point which was started some years since, whether Milton's Paradise Lost may be called an heroic poem? Those who will not give it that title, may call it (if they please) a divine poem. It will be sufficient to its perfection, if it has in it all the beauties of the highest

kind of poetry: and as for those who allege i is not an heroic poem, they advance no more t the diminution of it, than if they should sa Adam is not Æneas, nor Eve Helen.

I shall therefore examine it by the rules o epic poetry, and see whether it falls short o the Iliad or Æneid, in the beauties which ar essential to that kind of writing. The first thing to be considered in an epic poem is the fable which is perfect or imperfect, according as the action which it relates is more or less so. This action should have three qualifications in it First; it should be but one action. Secondly, it should be an entire action; and, Thirdly, it should be a great action. To consider the action of the Iliad, Æneid, and Paradise Lost, in these three several lights. Homer, to preserve the unity of his action, hastens into the midst of things, as Horace has observed. Had he gone up to Leda's egg, or began much later, even at the rape of Helen, or the investing of Troy, it is manifest that the story of the poem would have been a series of several actions. He therefore opens his poem with the discord of his princes, and artfully interweaves, in the several succeeding parts of it, an account of every thing material which relates to them, and had passed before that fatal dissension. After the same manner Æneas makes his first appearance in the Tyrrhene seas, and within sight of Italy, because the action proposed to be celebrated was that of his settling himself in Latium. But because it was necesary for the reader to know what had happened to him in the taking of Troy,

and in the preceding parts of his voyage, Virgil makes his hero relate it by way of episode in the second and third books of the Æneid. The contents of both which books come before those of the first book in the thread of the story, though, for preserving this unity of action, they follow them in the disposition of the poem. Milton, in imitation of these two great poets, opens his Paradise Lost with an infernal council plotting the fall of man, which is the action he proposed to celebrate; and as for those great actions, which preceded in point of time, the battle of the angels, and the creation of the world (which would have entirely destroyed the unity of the principal action, had he related them in the same order that they happened), he cast them in the fifth, sixth and seventh books, by way of episode to this noble poem.

Aristotle himself allows, that Homer has nothing to boast of as to the unity of his fable, though at the same time that great critic and philosopher endeavoured to palliate this imperfection in the Greek poet, by imputing it in some measure to the very nature of an epic poem. Some have been of opinion, that the Æneid also labours in this particular, and has *Episodes*, which may be looked upon as excrescences rather than as parts of the action. On the contrary, the poem which we have now under our consideration, hath no other episodes than such as naturally arise from the subject, and yet is filled with such a multitude of astonishing incidents, that it gives us at the same time a pleasure of the greatest variety and of the greatest simpli-

city; *uniform in its nature, though diversified in the execution.*

I must observe also, that as Virgil, in the poem which was designed to celebrate the original of the Roman Empire, has described the birth of its great rival, the Carthaginian commonwealth; Milton, with the like art in his poem on the fall of man, has related the fall of those angels who are his professed enemies. Besides the many other beauties in such an episode, its running parallel with the great action of the poem, hinders it from breaking the unity so much as another episode would have done, that had not so great affinity with the principal subject. In short, this is the same kind of beauty which the critics admire in the Spanish Friar, or the Double Discovery, where the two different plots look like counter-parts and copies of one another.

The second qualification required in the action of an epic poem is, that it should be an entire action. An action is entire when it is complete in all its parts; or, as Aristotle describes it, when it consists of a beginning, a middle, and an end. Nothing should go before it, be intermixed with it, or follow after it that is not related to it. As, on the contrary, no single step should be omitted in that just and regular process which it must be supposed to take from its original to its consummation. Thus we see the anger of Achilles in its birth, its continuance, and effects; and Æneas's settlement in Italy carried on through all the oppositions in his way to it both by sea and land. The action in Milton excels (I think)

both the former in this particular: we see it contrived in hell, executed upon earth, and punished by Heaven. The parts of it are told in the most distinct manner, and grow out of one another in the most natural order.

The third qualification of an epic poem is its greatness. The anger of Achilles was of such consequence that it embroiled the kings of Greece, destroyed the heroes of Troy, and engaged all the gods in factions. Æneas's settlement in Italy produced the Cæsars and gave birth to the Roman empire. Milton's subject was still greater than either of the former; it does not determine the fate of single persons or nations; but of a whole species. The united powers of hell are joined together for the destruction of mankind, which they effected in part, and would have completed, had not Omnipotence itself interposed. The principal actors are man in his greatest perfection, and woman in her highest beauty. Their enemies are the fallen angels; the Messiah their friend, and the Almighty their protector. In short, every thing that is great in the whole circle of being, whether within the verge of nature, or out of it, has a proper part assigned it in this admirable poem.

In poetry, as in architecture, not only the whole but the principal members, and every part of them, should be great. I will not presume to say, that the book of games in the Æneid, or that in the Iliad, are not of this nature: nor to reprehend Virgil's simile of the top, and many others of the same kind in the Iliad, as liable to any censure in this particular; but I think we

may say, without derogating from those wonderful performances, that there is an unquestionable magnificence in every part of Paradise Lost, and indeed a much greater than could have been formed upon any pagan system.

But Aristotle, by the greatness of the action does not only mean that it shold be great in its nature, but also its duration, or, in other words, that it should have a due length in it, as well as what we properly call greatness. The just measure of this kind of magnitude, he explains by the following similitude. An animal no bigger than a mite, cannot appear perfect to the eye, because the sight takes it in at once, and has only a confused idea of the whole, and not a distinct idea of all its parts; if, on the contrary, you should suppose an animal of ten thousand furlongs in length, the eye would be so filled with a single part of it, that it could not give the mind an idea of the whole. What these animals are to the eye, a very short or a very long action would be to the memory. The first would be, as it were, lost and swallowed up by it, and the other difficult to be contained in it. Homer and Virgil have shown their principal art in this particular: the action of the Iliad, and that of the Æneid, were in themselves exceeding short, but are so beautifully extended and diversified by the invention of episodes, and the machinery of gods, with the like poetical ornaments, that they make up an agreeable story, sufficient to employ the memory without overcharging it. Milton's action is enriched with such a variety of circumstances, that I have taken as much pleasure

in reading the contents of his books, as in the best invented story I ever met with.* It is possible, that the traditions on which the Iliad and Æneid were built, had more circumstances in them than the history of the fall of man, as it is related in Scripture. Besides, it was easier for Homer and Virgil to dash the truth with fiction, as they were in no danger of offending the religion of their country by it. But as for Milton, he had not only a very few circumstances upon which to raise his poem, but was also obliged to proceed with the greatest caution in every thing that he added out of his own invention. And indeed, notwithstanding all the restraint he was under, he has filled his story with so many surprising incidents, which bear so close an analogy with what is delivered in holy writ, that it is capable of pleasing the most delicate reader, without giving offence to the most scrupulous.

The modern critics have collected from several hints in the Iliad and Æneid the space of time, which is taken up by the action of each of those poems; but as a great part of Milton's story was transacted in regions that lie out of the reach of the sun and the sphere of day, it is impossible to gratify the reader with such a calculation, which indeed would be more curious than instructive: none of the critics, either ancient or modern, having laid down rules to circumscribe the action of an epic poem with any determined number of years, days, or hours.—L.

PAPER 11.

Notandi sunt tibi mores.—

HOR ARS. POET. v. 156.

Note well the manners.

HAVING examined the action of Paradise Lost let us in the next place consider the actors. This is Aristotle's method of considering, first the fable, and secondly the manners; or, as we generally call them in English, the fable and the characters.

Homer has excelled all the heroic poets that ever wrote in the multitude and variety of his characters. Every god that is admitted into his poem, acts a part which would have been suitable to no other deity. His princes are as much distinguished by their manners, as by their dominions; and even those among them, whose characters seem wholly made up of courage, differ from one another as to the particular kinds of courage in which they excel. In short, there is scarce a speech or action in the Iliad, which the reader may not ascribe to the person who speaks or acts, without seeing his name at the head of it.

HOMER does not only outshine all other poets in the variety, but also in the novelty of his characters. He has introduced among his Grecian princes a person who had lived thrice the age of man, and conversed with Theseus, Hercules, Polyphemus, and the first race of heroes. His principal actor is the son of a goddess, not to mention the offspring of other deities, who have

likewise a place in this poem, and the venerable Trojan prince, who was the father of so many kings and heroes. There is in these several characters of Homer, a certain dignity as well as novelty, which adapts them in a more peculiar manner to the nature of a heroic poem. Though, at the same time, to give them the greater variety, he has described a Vulcan, that is a buffoon, among his gods, and a Thersites among his mortals.

Virgil falls infinitely short of Homer in the characters of his poem, both as to their variety and novelty. Æneas is indeed a perfect character; but as for Achates, though he is styled the hero's friend, he does nothing in the whole poem which may deserve that title. Gyas, Monestheus, Sergestus, and Cloanthes, are all of them men of the same stamp and character:

——Fortemque Gyan, fortemque Cloanthem.

There are, indeed, several natural incidents in the part of Ascanius; and that of Dido cannot be sufficiently admired. I do not see any thing new or particular in Turnus. Pallas and Evander are remote copies of Hector and Priam, as Lausus and Mezentius are almost parallels to Pallas and Evander. The characters of Nisus and Euryalus are beautiful, but common. We must not forget the parts of Sinon, Camilla, and some few others, which are fine improvements on the Greek poet. In short, there is neither that variety nor novelty in the persons of the Æneid, which we meet with in those of the Iliad.

If we look into the characters of Milton, we shall find that he has introduced all the variety his fable was capable of receiving. The whole species of mankind was in two persons at the time to which the subject of his poem is confined. We have, however, four distinct characters in these two persons. We see man and woman in the highest innocence and perfection, and in the most abject state of guilt and infirmity. The two last characters are, indeed, very common and obvious, but the two first are not only more magnificent, but more new than any characters either in Virgil or Homer, or indeed in the whole circle of nature.

Milton was so sensible of this defect in the subject of his poem, and of the few characters it would afford him, that he has brought into it two actors of a shadowy and fictitious nature, in the persons of Sin, and Death, by which means he has wrought into the body of his fable a very beautiful and well-invented allegory. But notwithstanding the fineness of this allegory may atone for it in some measure, I cannot think that persons of such a chimerical existence are proper actors in an epic poem; because there is not that measure of probability annexed to them, which is requisite in writings of this kind, as I shall show more at large hereafter.

Virgil has indeed admitted Fame as an actress in the Æneid, but the part she acts is very short, and none of the most admired circumstances in that divine work. We find in mock-heroic poems, particularly in the Dispensary and the Lutrin, several allegorical persons of this nature,

which are very beautiful in these compositions, and may perhaps be used as an argument, that the authors of them were of opinion such characters might have a place in an epic work. For my own part, I should be glad the reader would think so, for the sake of the poem I am now examining: and must further add, that if such empty unsubstantial beings may be ever made use of on this occasion, never were any more nicely imagined, and employed in more proper actions, than those of which I am now speaking.

Another principal actor in this poem is the great enemy of mankind. The part of Ulysses in Homer's Odyssey is very much admired by Aristotle, as perplexing that fable with very agreeable plots and intricacies, not only by the many adventures in his voyage, and the subtilty of his behaviour, but by the various concealments and discoveries of his person in several parts of that poem. But the crafty being I have now mentioned makes a longer voyage than Ulysses, puts in practice many more wiles and stratagems, and hides himself under a greater variety of shapes and appearances, all of which are severally detected, to the great delight and surprise of the reader.

We may likewise observe with how much art the poet has varied several characters of the persons that speak in his infernal assembly. On the contrary, how has he represented the whole Godhead exerting itself towards man in its full benevolence, under the threefold distinction of a Creator, a Redeemer, and a Comforter!

Nor must we omit the person of Raphael, who,

amidst his tenderness and friendship for man, shows such a dignity and condescension in all his speech and behaviour, as are suitable to a superior nature. The angels are indeed as much diversified in Milton, and distinguished by their proper parts, as the gods are in Homer and Virgil. The reader will find nothing ascribed to Uriel, Gabriel, Michael, or Raphael, which is not in a particular manner suitable to their respective characters.

There is another circumstance in the principal actors of the Iliad and Æneid, which gives a peculiar beauty to those two poems, and was therefore contrived with very great judgment. I mean the authors having chosen for their heroes, persons who were so nearly related to the people for whom they wrote. Achilles was a Greek, and Æneas the remote founder of Rome. By this means their countrymen (whom they principally propose to themselves for their readers) were particularly attentive to all the parts of their story, and sympathized with their heroes in all their adventures. A Roman could not but rejoice in the escapes, successes, and victories, of Æneas, and be grieved at any defeats, misfortunes, or disappointments, that befel him; as a Greek must have had the same regard for Achilles. And it is plain, that each of those poems have lost this great advantage, among those readers to whom their heroes are as strangers, or indifferent persons.

Milton's poem is admirable in this respect, since it is impossible for any of its readers, whatever nation, country, or people, he may belong

to, not to be related to the persons who are the principal actors in it; but what is still infinitely more to its advantage, the principal actors in this poem are not only our progenitors, but our representatives. We have an actual interest in every thing they do, and no less than our utmost happiness is concerned, and lies at stake in all their behaviour.

I shall subjoin, as a corollary to the foregoing remark, an admirable observation out of Aristotle, which has been very much misrepresented in the quotations of some modern critics; If a man of perfect and consummate virtue falls into a misfortune, it raises our pity, but not our terror, because we do not fear that it may be our own case, who do not resemble the suffering person. But, as that great philosopher adds, if we see a man of virtue mixed with infirmities fall into any misfortune, it does not only raise our pity but our terror; because we are afraid that the like misfortunes may happen to ourselves, who resemble the character of the suffering person.

I shall take another opportunity to observe, that a person of an absolute and consummate virtue should never be introduced in tragedy, and shall only remark in this place, that the foregoing observation of Aristotle, though it may be true in other occasions, does not hold in this; because in the present case, though the persons who fall into misfortune are of the most perfect and consummate virtue, it is not to be considered as what may possibly be, but what actually is our own case; since we are embarked with

them on the same bottom, and must be partakers of their happiness or misery.

In this, and some other very few instances, Aristotle's rules for epic poetry (which he had drawn from his reflections upon Homer) cannot be supposed to quadrate exactly with the heroic poems which have been made since his time; since it is plain his rules would still have been more perfect, could he have perused the Æneid, which was made some hundred years after his death.

In my next, I shall go through other parts of Milton's poem; and hope that what I shall there advance, as well as what I have already written, will not only serve as a comment upon Milton, but upon Aristotle.—L.

PAPER III.

Reddere personæ scit convenientia cuique.

HOR. ARS. POET. v. 316.

He knows what best befits each character.

WE have already taken a general survey of the fable and characters in Milton's Paradise Lost. The parts which remain to be considered according to Aristotle's method, are the sentiment and the language. Before I enter upon the first of these, I must advertise my reader, that it is my design, as soon as I have finished my general reflections on these four several heads, to give particular instances out of the poem which is now before us of beauties and imperfections which may be observed under each of them, as also of such other particulars as may not pro-

perly fall under any of them. This I thought fit to premise, that the reader may not judge too hastily of this piece of criticism, or look upon it as imperfect, before he has seen the whole extent of it.

The sentiments in an epic poem are the thoughts and behaviour which the author ascribes to the persons whom he introduces, and are just when they are conformable to the characters of the several persons. The sentiments have likewise a relation to things as well as persons, and are then perfect when they are such as are adapted to the subject. If in either of these cases the poet endeavours to argue or explain, to magnify or diminish, to raise love or hatred, pity or terror, or any other passion, we ought to consider whether the sentiments he makes use of are proper for those ends. Homer is censured by the critics for his defect as to this particular in several parts of the Iliad and Odyssey, though at the same time those who have treated this great poet with candour, have attributed this defect to the times in which he lived. It was the fault of the age and not of Homer, if there wants that delicacy in some of his sentiments, which now appears in the works of men of a much inferior genius. Besides, if there are blemishes in any particular thoughts, there is an infinite beauty in the greatest part of them. In short, if there are many poets who would not have fallen into the meanness of some of his sentiments, there are none who could have risen up to the greatness of others. Virgil has excelled all others in the propriety of his sentiments. Milton shines like-

wise very much in this particular: nor must we omit one consideration which adds to his honour and reputation. Homer and Virgil introduced persons whose characters are commonly known among men, and such as are to be met with either in history or in ordinary conversation. Milton's characters, most of them, lie out of nature, and were to be formed purely by his own invention. It shows a greater genius in Shakspeare to have drawn his Caliban, than his Hotspur or Julius Cæsar: the one was to be supplied out of his own imagination, whereas the other might have been formed upon tradition, history, and observation. It was much easier therefore for Homer to find proper sentiments for an assembly of Grecian generals, than for Milton to diversify his infernal council with proper characters, and inspire them with a variety of sentiments. The loves of Dido and Æneas are only copies of what has passed betwen other persons. Adam and Eve, before the fall, are a different species from that of mankind, who are descended from them; and none but a poet of the most unbounded invention, and the most exquisite judgment, could have filled their conversation and behaviour with so many apt circumstances during their state of innocence.

Nor is it sufficient for an epic poem to be filled with such thoughts as are natural, unless it abound also with such as are sublime. Virgil in this particular falls short of Homer. He has not indeed so many thoughts that are low and vulgar; but at the same time has not so many thoughts that are sublime and noble. The truth

of it is, Virgil seldom rises into very astonishing sentiments, where he is not fired by the Iliad. He every where charms and pleases us by the force of his own genius; but seldom elevates and transports us where he does not fetch his hints from Homer.

Milton's chief talent, and indeed his distinguishing excellence, lies in the sublimity of his thoughts. There are others of the moderns who rival him in every other part of poetry; but in the greatness of his sentiments he triumphs over all the poets both modern and ancient, Homer only excepted. It is impossible for the imagination of man to distend itself with greater ideas, than those which he has lain together in his first, second, and sixth books. The seventh, which describes the creation of the world, is likewise wonderfully sublime, though not so apt to stir up emotion in the mind of the reader, nor consequently so perfect in the epic way of writing, because it is filled with less action. Let the judicious reader compare what Longinus has observed on several passages in Homer, and he will find parallels for most of them in the Paradise Lost.

From what has been said we may infer, that as there are two kinds of sentiments, the natural and the sublime, which are always to be pursued in a heroic poem, there are also two kinds of thoughts which are carefully to be avoided. The first are such as are affected and unnatural; the second such as are mean and vulgar. As for the first kind of thoughts, we meet with little or nothing that is like them in Virgil. He has none

of those trifling points and puerilities that are so often to be met with in Ovid, none of the epigrammatic turns of Lucan, none of those swelling sentiments which are so frequent in Statius and Claudian, none of those mixed embellishments of Tasso. Every thing is just and natural. His sentiments show that he had a perfect insight into human nature, and that he knew every thing which was the most proper to affect it.

Mr. Dryden has in some places, which I may hereafter take notice of, misrepresented Virgil's way of thinking as to this particular, in the translation he has given us of the Æneid. I do not remember that Homer any where falls into the faults above mentioned, which were indeed the false refinements of latter ages. Milton, it must be confessed has sometimes erred in this respect, as I shall show more at large in another paper; though considering how all the poets of the age in which he writ were infected with this wrong way of thinking, he is rather to be admired that he did not give more into it, than that he did sometimes comply with the vicious taste which still prevails so much among modern writers.

But since several thoughts may be natural which are low and grovelling, an epic poet should not only avoid such sentiments as are unnatural or affected, but also such as are mean and vulgar. Homer has opened a great field of raillery to men of more delicacy than greatness of genius, by the homeliness of some of his sentiments. But as I have before said, these are rather to be imputed to the simplicity of the age in which he lived, to which I may also add, of that which he

described, than to any imperfection in that divine poet. Zoilus among the ancients, and Monsieur Perrault among the moderns, pushed their ridicule very far upon him, on account of some such sentiments. There is no blemish to be observed in Virgil under this head, and but a very few in Milton.

I shall give but one instance of this impropriety of thought in Homer, and at the same time compare it with an instance of the same nature, both in Virgil and Milton. Sentiments which raise laughter can very seldom be admitted with any decency into a heroic poem, whose business it is to excite passions of a much nobler nature. Homer, however, in his characters of Vulcan and Thersites, in his story of Mars and Venus, in his behaviour of Irus, and in other passages, has been observed to have lapsed into the burlesque character, and to have departed from that serious air which seems essential to the magnificence of an epic poem. I remember but one laugh in the whole Æneid, which rises in the fifth book, upon Monœtes, where he is represented as thrown overbroad, and drying himself upon a rock. But this piece of mirth is so well-timed that the severest critic can have nothing to say against it; for it is the book of games and diversions, where the reader's mind may be supposed sufficiently relaxed for such an entertainment. The only piece of pleasantry in Paradise Lost, is where the evil spirits are described as rallying the angels upon the success of their newly-invented artillery. This passage I look upon to be the most exceptionable in the whole poem, as

being nothing else but a string of puns, and those, too, very indifferent ones.

——— Satan beheld their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision call'd:
"O friends, why come not on those victors proud?
Erewhile they fierce were coming; and when we,
To entertain them fair with open front
And breast (what could we more?) propounded terms
Of composition, straight they chang'd their minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell
As they would dance; yet for a dance they seem'd
Somewhat extravagant, and wild; perhaps
For joy of offer'd peace; but I suppose
If our proposals once again were heard,
We should compel them to a quick result."
To whom thus Belial in like gamesome mood:
"Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home:
Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,
And stumbled many: who receives them right,
Had need from head to foot well understand;
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They show us when our foes walk not upright."
Thus they among themselves in pleasant vein
Stood scoffing———

MILTON'S PAR. LOST, B. VI. l. 609, &c.

PAPER IV.

Ne, quicunque Deus, quicunque adhibebitur heros,
Regali conspectus in auro nuper et ostro,
Migret in obscuras humili sermone tabernas;
Aut, dum vitat humum, nubes et inania captet.

HOR. ARS. POET. v. 227.

But then they did not wrong themselves so much,
To make a god, a hero, or a king.
(Stript of his golden crown, and purple robe)
Descend to a mechanic dialect;
Nor (to avoid such meanness) soaring high,
With empty sound, and airy notions fly.—ROSCOMMON.

HAVING already treated of the fable, the characters, and sentiments in Paradise Lost, we are in

the last place, to consider the language; and as the learned world is very much divided upon Milton as to this point, I hope they will excuse me if I appear particular in any of my opinions, and incline to those who judge most advantageously of the author.

It is requisite that the language of a heroic poem should be both perspicuous and sublime. In proportion as either of these two qualities are wanting, the language is imperfect. Perspicuity is the first and most necessary qualification; insomuch that a good-natured reader sometimes overlooks a little slip even in the grammar or syntax, where it is impossible for him to mistake the poet's sense. Of this kind is that passage in Milton, wherein he speaks of Satan:

> ———God and his Son except,
> Created thing nought valu'd he nor shun'd:

and that in which he describes Adam and Eve:

> Adam the goodliest man of men since born
> His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.

It is plain, that in the former of these passages, according to the natural syntax, the Divine persons mentioned in the first line are represented as created beings; and that, in the other, Adam and Eve are confounded with their sons and daughters. Such little blemishes as these, when the thought is great and natural, we should with Horace, impute to a pardonable inadvertency, or to the weakness of human nature, which cannot attend to each minute particular, and give the last finishing to every circumstance

in so long a work. The ancient critics, therefore, who were actuated by a spirit of candour, rather than that of cavilling, invented certain figures of speech, on purpose to palliate little errors of this nature in the writings of those authors who had so many greater beauties to atone for them.

If clearness and perspicuity were only to be consulted, the poet would have nothing else to do but to clothe his thoughts in the most plain and natural expressions. But since it often happens that the most obvious phrases, and those which are used in ordinary conversation, become too familiar to the ear, and contract a kind of meanness by passing through the mouths of the vulgar; a poet should take particular care to guard himself against idiomatic ways of speaking. Ovid and Lucan have many poornesses of expression upon this account, as taking up with the first phrases that offered, without putting themselves to the trouble of looking after such as would not only have been natural, but also elevated and sublime. Milton has but few failings in this kind, of which, however, you may meet with some instances, as in the following passages:

> Embrios and idiots, eremites and friars,
> White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery,
> Here pilgrims roam———"
>
> —A while discourse they hold
> No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began
> Our author———
>
> Who of all ages to succeed, but feeling
> The evil on him brought by me, will curse
> My head,—Ill fare our ancestor impure,
> For this we may thank Adam.———

The great masters in composition know very well that many an elegant phrase becomes improper for a poet or an orator, when it has been debased by common use. For this reason the works of ancient authors, which are written in dead languages, have a great advantage over those which are written in languages that are now spoken. Were there any mean phrases or idioms in Virgil or Homer, they would not shock the ear of the most delicate modern reader, so much as they would have done that of an old Greek or Roman, because we never hear them pronounced in our streets, or in ordinary conversation.

It is not therefore sufficient that the language of an epic poem be perspicuous, unless it be also sublime. To this end it ought to deviate from the common forms and ordinary phrases of speech. The judgment of a poet very much discovers itself in shunning the common roads of expression, without falling into such ways of speech as may seem stiff and unnatural: he must not swell into a false sublime, by endeavouring to avoid the other extreme. Among the Greeks, Æschylus, and sometimes Sophocles, were guilty of this fault; among the Latins, Claudian and Statius; and among our own countrymen, Shakspeare and Lee. In these authors the affectation of greatness often hurts the perspicuity of the style, as in many others the endeavour after perspicuity prejudices its greatness.

Aristotle has observed, that the idiomatic style may be avoided, and the sublime formed, by the

following methods. First, by the use of metaphors; such are those of Milton;

Imparadis'd in one another's arms.

——And in his hand a reed
Stood waving tipt with fire.——

The grassy clods now calv'd——

Spangled with eyes——.

In these and innumerable other instances, the metaphors are very bold but just: I must however observe, that if the metaphors are not so thick sown in Milton, which always savours too much of wit, that they never clash with one another, which, as Aristotle observes, turns a sentence into a kind of enigma or riddle; and that he seldom has recourse to them where the proper and natural words will do as well.

Another way of raising the language, and giving it a poetical turn, is to make use of the idioms of other tongues. Virgil is full of the Greek forms of speech, which the critics call Hellenisms, as Horace in his odes abounds with them much more than Virgil. I need not mention the several dialects which Homer has made use of for this end. Milton, in conformity with the practice of the ancient poets, and with Aristotle's rule has infused a great many Latinisms, as well as Græcisms, and sometimes Hebraisms, into the language of his poem; as towards the beginning of it:

Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel.
Yet to their general's voice they soon obey'd—

———Who shall tempt with wandering feet
The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight
Upborne with indefatigable wings
Over the vast abrupt?
———So both ascend
In the visions of God—— BOOK II.

Under this head may be reckoned the placing the adjective after the substantive, the transposition of words, the turning the adjective into a substantive, with several other foreign modes of speech which this poet has naturalized, to give his verse the greater sound, and throw it out of prose.

The third method mentioned by Aristotle, is what agrees with the genius of the Greek language more than with that of any other tongue, and is therefore more used by Homer than by any other poet. I mean the lengthening of a phrase by the addition of words, which may either be inserted or omitted, as also by the extending or contracting of particular words by the insertion or omission of certain syllables. Milton has put in practice this method of raising his language, as far as the nature of our tongue will permit, as in the passage above-mentioned, eremite, for what is hermit in common discourse. If you observe the measure of his verse, he has with great judgment suppressed a syllable in several words, and shortened those of two syllables into one; by which method, besides the above mentioned advantage, he has given a greater variety to his numbers. But this practice is more particularly remarkable in the names of

persons and of countries, as Beelzebub, Hessebon, and in many other particulars, wherein he has either changed the name, or made use of that which is not the most commonly known, that he might the better deviate from the language of the vulgar.

The same reason recommended to him several old words, which also makes his poem appear the more venerable, and gives it a greater air of antiquity.

I must likewise take notice, that there are in Milton several words of his own coining, as "cerberean, miscreated, hell-doomed, embryon atoms," and many others. If the reader is offended at this liberty in our English poet, I would recommend to him a discourse in Plutarch, which shows us how frequently Homer has made use of the same liberty.

Milton, by the above-mentioned helps, and by the choice of the noblest words and phrases which our tongue would afford him, has carried our language to a greater height than any of the English poets have ever done before or after him, and made the sublimity of his style equal to that of his sentiments.

I have been the more particular in these observations on Milton's style, because it is in that part of him in which he appears the most singular. The remarks I have here made upon the practice of other poets, with my observations out of Aristotle, will perhaps alleviate the prejudice which some have taken to his poem upon this account; though, after all, I must confess that I think his style, though admirable in general, is

in some places too much stiffened and obscured by the frequent use of those methods which Aristotle has prescribed for the raising of it.

This redundancy of those several ways of speech which Aristotle calls "foreign language," and with which Milton has so very much enriched, and in some places darkened, the language of his poem, was the more proper for his use, because his poem is written in blank verse. Rhyme, without any other assistance, throws the language off from prose, and very often makes an indifferent phrase pass unregarded; but where the verse is not built upon rhymes, there pomp of sound and energy of expression are indispensably necessary to support the style, and keep it from falling into the flatness of prose.

Those who have not a taste for this elevation of style, and are apt to ridicule a poet when he departs from the common forms of expression, would do well to see how Aristotle has treated an ancient author called Euclid, for his insipid mirth upon this occasion. Mr. Dryden used to call these sort of men his prose-critics.

I should, under this head of the language, consider Milton's numbers, in which he has made use of several elisions, which are not customary among other English poets, as may be particularly observed in his cutting off the letter Y, when it precedes a vowel. This, and some other innovations in the measure of his verse, has varied his numbers in such a manner, as makes them incapable of satiating the ear, and cloying the reader, which the same uniform measure would certainly have done, and which the perpetual

returns of rhyme never fail to do in long narrative poems. I shall close these reflections upon the language of Paradise Lost with observing, that Milton has copied after Homer rather than Virgil in the length of his periods, the copiousness of his phrases, and the running of his verses into one another.—L.

PAPER V.

——Ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavet natura.——

HOR. ARS. POET. v. 351.

But in a poem elegantly writ,
I will not quarrel with a slight mistake,
Such as our nature's frailty may excuse.——ROSCOMMON.

I HAVE now considered Milton's Paradise Lost under those four great heads of the fable, the characters, the sentiments, and the language; and have shown that he excels in general, under each of these heads. I hope that I have made several discoveries which may appear new, even to those who are versed in critical learning. Were I indeed to choose my readers, by whose judgment I would stand or fall, they should not be such as are acquainted only with the French and Italian critics, but also with the ancient and modern who have written in either of the learned languages. Above all, I would have them well versed in the Greek and Latin poets, without which a man very often fancies that he understands a critic, when in reality he does not comprehend his meaning.

It is in criticism as in all other sciences and speculations; one who brings with him any implicit notions and observations which he has made in his reading of the poets, will find his own reflections methodised and explained, and perhaps several little hints that had passed in his mind, perfected and improved in the works of a good critic; whereas one who has not these previous lights is very often an utter stranger to what he reads, and apt to put a wrong interpretation upon it.

Nor is it sufficient that a man, who sets up for a judge in criticism, should have perused the authors above mentioned, unless he has also a clear and logical head. Without this talent he is perpetually puzzled and perplexed amidst his own blunders, mistakes the sense of those he would confute, or, if he chances to think right, does not know how to convey his thoughts to another with clearness and perspicuity. Aristotle, who was the best critic, was also one of the best logicians that ever appeared in the world.

Mr. Locke's Essay on Human Understanding would be thought a very odd book for a man to make himself master of, who would get a reputation by critical writings; though at the same time it is very certain, that an author who has not learned the art of distinguishing between words and things, and of ranging his thoughts and setting them in proper lights, whatever notions he may have, will lose himself in confusion and obscurity. I might further observe that there is not a Greek or Latin critic, who has not shown, even in the style of his criticisms, that he was a

master of all the elegance and delicacy of his native tongue.

The truth of it is, there is nothing more absurd, than for a man to set up for a critic without a good insight into all the parts of learning; whereas many of those, who have endeavoured to signalize themselves by works of this nature, among our English writers, are not only defective in the above-mentioned particulars, but plainly discover, by the phrases which they make use of, and by their confused way of thinking that they are not acquainted with the most common and ordinary systems of arts and sciences. A few general rules extracted out of the French authors, with a certain cant of words has sometimes set up an illiterate heavy writer for a most judicious and formidable critic.

One great mark, by which you may discover a critic who has neither taste nor learning, is this that he seldom ventures to praise any passage in an author which has not been before received and applauded by the public, and that his criticism turns wholly upon little faults and errors. This part of a critic is so very easy to succeed in, that we find every ordinary reader, upon the publishing of a new poem, has wit and ill-nature enough to turn several passages of it into ridicule, and very often in the right place. This Mr Dryden has very agreeably remarked in these two celebrated lines:

> Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow;
> He who would search for pearls, must dive below.

A true critic ought to dwell rather upon excel

lences than imperfections to discover the concealed beauties of a writer, and communicate to the world such things as are worth their observation. The most exquisite words, and finest strokes of an author, are those which very often appear the most doubtful and exceptionable to a man who wants a relish for polite learning; and they are these, which a sour undistinguishing critic generally attacks with the greatest violence. Tully observes, that it is very easy to brand or fix a mark upon what he calls *verbum ardens*, or as it may be rendered into English, "a glowing bold expression," and to turn it into ridicule by a cold ill-natured criticism. A little wit is equally capable of exposing a beauty and of aggravating a fault; and though such a treatment of an author naturally produces indignation in the mind of an understanding reader, it has however its effect among the generality of those whose hands it falls into, the rabble of mankind being very apt to think that every thing which is laughed at, with any mixture of wit, is ridiculous in itself.

Such a mirth as this is always unseasonable in a critic, as it rather prejudices the reader than convinces him, and is capable of making a beauty, as well as blemish, the subject of derision. A man who cannot write with wit on a proper subject, is dull and stupid; but one who shows it in an improper place, is as impertinent and absurd. Besides, a man who has the gift of ridicule is apt to find fault with any thing that gives him an opportunity of exerting his beloved talent, and very often censures a passage, not because there is any fault in it, but because he

can be merry upon it. Such kinds of pleasantry are very unfair and disingenuous in works of criticism, in which the greatest masters, both ancient and modern, have always appeared with a serious and instructive air.

As I intend in my next paper to show the defects in Milton's Paradise Lost, I thought fit to premise these few particulars, to the end that the reader may know I enter upon it as on a very ungrateful work, and that I shall just point at the imperfections without endeavouring to inflame them with ridicule. I must also observe with Longinus, that the productions of a great genius, with many lapses and inadvertencies, are infinitely preferable to the works of an inferior kind of author, which are scrupulously exact, and conformable to all the rules of correct writing.

I shall conclude my paper with a story out of Boccalini, which sufficiently shows us the opinion that judicious author entertained of the sort of critics I have been here mentioning. A famous critic, says he, having gathered together all the faults of an eminent poet, made a present of them to Apollo, who received them very graciously, and resolved to make the author a suitable return for the trouble he had been at in collecting them. In order to this, he set before him a sack of wheat, as it had been just thrashed out of the sheaf. He then bid him pick out the chaff from among the corn, and lay it aside by itself. The critic applied himself to the task with great industry and pleasure, and, after having made the due separation, was presented by Apollo with the chaff for his pains.—L.

PAPER VI.

——velut si
Egregio inspersos reprendas corpore nævos.

HOR. 1 SAT. VI. 66.

As perfect beauties somewhere have a mole.——CREECH.

AFTER what I have said in my last paper, I shall enter on the subject of this without further preface, and remark the several defects which appear in the fable, the characters, the sentiments, and the language of Milton's Paradise Lost; not doubting but the reader will pardon me, if I allege at the same time whatever may be said for the extenuation of such defects. The first imperfection which I shall observe in the fable is, that the event of it is unhappy.

The fable of every poem is, according to Aristotle's division, either simple or complex. It is called simple when there is no change of fortune in it: complex, when the fortune of the chief actor changes from bad to good, or from good to bad. The complex fable is thought the most perfect: I suppose, because it is more proper to stir up the passions of the reader, and to surprise him with a great variety of accidents.

The complex fable is therefore of two kinds: in the first, the chief actor makes his way through a long series of dangers and difficulties, until he arrives at honour and prosperity, as we see in the stories of Ulysses and Æneas; in the second, the chief actor in the poem falls from some eminent pitch of honour and prosperity, into misery and disgrace. Thus we see Adam and Eve sink-

ing from a state of innocence and happiness, into the most abject condition of sin and sorrow.

The most taking tragedies among the ancients were built on this last sort of complex fable, particularly the tragedy of *Œdipus*, which proceeds upon a story, if we may believe Aristotle, the most proper for tragedy, that could be invented by the wit of man. I have taken some pains in a former paper to show, that this kind of complex fable, wherein the event is unhappy, is more apt to affect an audience than that of the first kind; notwithstanding many excellent pieces among the ancients, as well as most of those which have been written of late years in our own country, are raised upon contrary plans. I must however own, that I think this kind of fable, which is the most perfect in tragedy, is not so proper for an heroic poem.

Milton seems to have been sensible of this imperfection in his fable, and has therefore endeavoured to cure it by several expedients; particularly by the mortification which the great adversary of mankind meets with upon his return to the assembly of infernal spirits, as it is described in a beautiful passage of the third book; and likewise by the vision wherein Adam, at the close of the poem, sees his offspring triumphing over his great enemy, and himself restored to a happier paradise than that from which he fell.

There is another objection against Milton's fable, which is indeed almost the same with the former, though placed in a different light, namely—that the heroic in the Paradise Lost is

unsuccessful, and by no means a match for his enemies. This gives occasion for Mr. Dryden's reflection, that the devil was in reality Milton's hero. I think I have obviated this objection in my first paper. The Paradise Lost is an epic or a narrative poem, and he that looks for a hero in it, searches for that which Milton never intended; but if he will indeed fix the name of a hero upon any person in it, it is certainly the Messiah who is the hero, both in the principal action and in the chief episodes. Paganism could not furnish out a real action for a fable greater than that of the Iliad or Æneid, and therefore a heathen could not form a higher notion of a poem than one of that kind which they call an heroic. Whether Milton's is not of a sublimer nature I will not presume to determine; it is sufficient that I show there is in the Paradise Lost all the greatness of plan, regularity of design, and masterly beauties which we discover in Homer and Virgil.

I must in the next place observe, that Milton has interwoven in the texture of this fable some particulars which do not seem to have probability enough for an epic poem, particularly in the actions which he ascribes to Sin and Death, and the picture which he draws of the "Limbo of Vanity," with other passages in the second book. Such allegories rather savour of the spirit of Spencer and Ariosto, than of Homer and Virgil.

In the structure of his poem he has likewise admitted too many digressions. It is finely observed by Aristotle, that the author of an heroic poem should seldom speak himself, but throw as

much of his work as he can into the mouths of those who are his principal actors. Aristotle has given no reason for this precept: but I presume it is because the mind of the reader is more awed and elevated, when he hears Æneas or Achilles speak, than when Virgil or Homer talk in their own persons. Besides that, assuming the character of an eminent man is apt to fire the imagination, and raise the ideas of the author. Tully tells us, mentioning his dialogue of old age, in which Cato is the chief speaker, that upon a review of it he was agreeably imposed upon, and fancied that it was Cato, and not he himself, who uttered his thoughts on that subject.

If the reader would be at the pains to see how the story of the Iliad and the Æneid is delivered by those persons who act in it, he will be surprised to find how little either of these poems proceeds from the authors. Milton has, in the general disposition of his fable, very finely observed this great rule; insomuch that there is scarce a tenth part of it which comes from the poet; the rest is spoken either by Adam or Eve, or by some good or evil spirit who is engaged, either in their destruction, or defence.

From what has been here observed, it appears, that digressions are by no means to be allowed in an epic poem. If the poet, even in the ordinary course of his narration, should speak as little as possible, he should certainly never let his narration sleep for the sake of any reflections of his own. I have often observed with a secret admiration, that the longest reflection in the Æneid is in that passage of the tenth book, where

Turnus is represented as dressing himself in the spoils of Pallas, whom he had slain. Virgil here lets his fable stand still, for the sake of the following remark: "How is the mind of man ignorant of futurity, and unable to bear prosperous fortune with moderation! The time will come when Turnus shall wish that he had left the body of Pallas untouched, and curse the day on which he dressed himself in these spoils." As the great event of the Æneid, and the death of Turnus, whom Æneas slew because he saw him adorned with the spoils of Pallas, turns upon this incident, Virgil went out of his way to make this reflection upon it, without which so small a circumstance might possibly have slipt out of his reader's memory. Lucan, who was an injudicious poet, lets drop his story very frequently for the sake of his unnecessary digressions, or his *diverticula*, as Scaliger calls them. If he gives us an account of the prodigies which preceded the civil war, he declaims upon the occasion, and shows how much happier it would be for man, if he did not feel his evil fortune before it comes to pass; and suffer not only by its real weight, but by the apprehension of it. Milton's complaint for his blindness, his panegyric on marriage, his reflections on Adam and Eve's going naked, of the angels' eating, and several other passages in his poem, are liable to the same exception, though I must confess there is so great a beauty in these very digressions that I would not wish them out of his poem.

I have in a former paper spoken of the characters of Milton's Paradise Lost, and declared my

opinion as to the allegorical persons who are introduced in it.

If we look into the sentiments, I think they are sometimes defective under the following heads; first, as there are several of them too much pointed, and some that degenerate even into puns. Of this last kind I am afraid is that in the first book, where, speaking of the pigmies, he calls them.

—The small infantry
Warr'd on by cranes—

Another blemish that appears in some of his thoughts, is his frequent allusion to heathen fables, which are not certainly of a piece with the divine subject of which he treats. I do not find fault with these allusions where the poet himself represents them as fabulous, as he does in some places, but where he mentions them as truths and matters of fact. The limits of my paper will not give me leave to be particular in instances of this kind; the reader will easily remark them in his perusal of the poem.

A third fault in his sentiments is an uneasy ostentation of learning, which likewise occurs very frequently. It is certain that both Homer and Virgil were masters of all the learning of their times, but it shows itself in their works after an indirect and concealed manner Milton seems ambitious of letting us know, by his excursions on free will and predestination, and his many glances upon history, astronomy, geography, and the like, as well as by the terms and phrases he sometimes makes use of, that he was

acquainted with the whole circle of arts and sciences.

If in the last place we consider the language of this great poet, we must allow what I have hinted in a former paper, that it is often too much laboured, and sometimes obscured by old words, transpositions, and foreign idioms. Seneca's objection to the style of a great author, "*Riget ejus oratio, nihil in eâ placidum, nihil lene,*" is what many critics make to Milton. As I cannot wholly refute it, so I have already apologised for it in another paper: to which I may further add, that Milton's sentiments and ideas were so wonderfully sublime, that it would have been impossible for him to have represented them in their full strength and beauty, without having recourse to those foreign assistances. Our language sunk under him, and was unequal to that greatness of soul which furnished him with such glorious conceptions.

A second fault in his language is, that he often affects a kind of jingle in his words, as in the following passages and many others:

> And brought into the world a world of woe.
> ——————Begirt th' Almighty throne
> Beseeching or besieging——
> This tempted our attempt——
> At one slight bound high over leapt all bound.

I know there are figures for this kind of speech; that some of the greatest ancients have been guilty of it, and that Aristotle himself has given it a place in his rhetoric among the beauties of that art. But as it is in itself poor and trifling,

it is, I think, at present universally exploded by all the masters of polite writing.

The last fault which I shall take notice of in Milton's style, is the frequent use of what the learned call technical words, or terms of art. It is one of the greatest beauties of poetry, to make hard things intelligible, and to deliver what is abstruse of itself in such easy language as may be understood by ordinary readers; besides that the knowledge of a poet should rather seem born with them, or inspired, than drawn with books and systems. I have often wondered how Mr. Dryden could translate a passage out of Virgil after the following manner:

> Tack to the larboard and stand off to sea,
> Veer starboard sea and land.——

Milton makes use of larboard in the same manner. When he is upon building, he mentions doric pillars, pilasters, cornice, frieze, architrave. When he talks of heavenly bodies, you meet ecliptic and eccentric, the trepidation, stars dropping from the zenith, rays culminating from the equator: to which might be added many instances of the like kind in several other arts and sciences.

I shall in my next papers given an account of the many particular beauties in Milton, which would have been too long to insert under those general heads I have already treated of, and which I intend to conclude this piece of criticism.—L.

PAPER VII.

Volat hæc sub luce videri
Judicis argutum quæ non formidat acumen.

HOR. ARS. POET. v. 363.

———Some choose the clearest light,
And boldly challenge the most piercing eye.

ROSCOMMON.

I HAVE seen, in the works of a modern philosopher, a map of the spots in the sun. My last paper of the faults and blemishes in Milton's Paradise Lost may be considered as a piece of the same nature. To pursue the illusion: as it is observed, that among the bright parts of the luminous body above mentioned, there are some which glow more intensely, and dart a stronger light than others; so, notwithstanding I have already shown Milton's poem to be very beautiful in general, I shall now proceed to take notice of such beauties as appear to me more exquisite than the rest. Milton has proposed the subject of his poem in the following verses:

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit,
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, heavenly Muse!——

These lines are, perhaps, as plain, simple, and unadorned, as any of the whole poem, in which particular the author has conformed himself to the example of Homer, and the precept of Horace.

His invocation to a work which turns in a great measure upon the creation of the world, is very properly made to the Muse who inspired Moses in those books from whence our author drew his subject, and to the Holy Spirit, who is therein represented as operating after a particular manner in the first production of nature. Thus this whole exordium rises very happily into noble language and sentiments, as I think the transition to the fable is exquisitely beautiful and natural.

The nine days' astonishment, in which the angels lay entranced after their dreadful overthrow and fall from heaven, before they could recover either the use of thought or speech, is a noble circumstance, and very finely imagined. The division of hell into seas of fire, and into firm ground impregnated with the same furious element, with that particular circumstance of the exclusion of Hope from those infernal regions, are instances of the same great and fruitful invention.

The thoughts in the first speech and description of Satan, who is one of the principal actors in this poem, are wonderfully proper to give us a full idea of him. His pride, envy, and revenge, obstinacy, despair, and impenitence, are all of them very artfully interwoven. In short, his first speech is a complication of all those passions which discover themselves separately in several other of his speeches in the poem. The whole part of this great enemy of mankind is filled with such incidents, as are very apt to raise and terrify the reader's imagination. Of this nature, in the

book now before us, is his being the first that awakens out of the general trance, with his posture on the burning lake, his rising from it, and the description of his shield and spear:

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate,
With head up-lift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blaz'd, his other parts beside
Prone on the flood extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood——
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
Driv'n backward slope their pointing spires, and, roll'd
In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wing he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air
That felt unusual weight——
——His ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artists view
At ev'ning from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains, on her spotty globe.
His spear (to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills to be the mast
Of some great ammiral, were but a wand)
He walk'd with, to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marl——

To which we may add his call to the fallen angels that lay plunged and stupified in the sea of fire:

He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of hell resounded.

But there is no single passage in the whole poem worked up to a greater sublimity, than that

wherein his person is described in those celebrated lines:

> —He, above the rest
> In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
> Stood like a tower, &c.

His sentiments are every way answerable to his character, and suitable to a created being of the most exalted and most depraved nature. Such is that in which he takes possession of his place of torments:

> —Hail, horrors! hail,
> Infernal world! and thou, profoundest hell,
> Receive thy new possessor, one who brings
> A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.

And afterward:

> ——Here at least
> We shall be free! th' Almighty hath not built
> Here for his envy; will not drive us hence:
> Here we may reign secure; and in my choice
> To reign is worth ambition, though in hell:
> Better to reign in hell, than serve in heav'n.

Amidst those impieties which this enraged spirit utters in other places of the poem, the author has taken care to introduce none that is not big with absurdity, and incapable of shocking a religious reader; his words, as the poet himself describes them, bearing only a "semblance of worth, not substance." He is likewise with great art described as owning his adversary to be Almighty. Whatever perverse interpretation he puts on the justice, mercy, and other attributes

of the Supreme Being, he frequently confesses his omnipotence, that being the perfection he was forced to allow him, and the only consideration which could support his pride under the shame of his defeat.

Nor must I here omit that beautiful circumstance of his bursting out into tears, upon his survey of those innumerable spirits whom he had involved in the same guilt and ruin with himself:

> -He now prepar'd
> To speak: whereat their doubled ranks they bend
> From wing to wing, and half inclose him round
> With all his peers: Attention held them mute.
> Thrice he assay'd and thrice, in spite of scorn,
> Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth——

The catalogue of evil spirits has abundance of learning in it, and a very agreeable turn of poetry, which rises in a great measure from its describing the places where they were worshipped, by those beautiful marks of rivers so frequent among the ancient poets. The author had doubtless in this place Homer's catalogue of ships, and Virgil's list of warriors, in his view. The characters of Moloch and Belial prepare the reader's mind for their respective speeches and behaviour in the second and sixth books. The account of Thammuz is finely romantic, and suitable to what we read among the ancients of the worship which was paid to that idol;

> -Thammuz came next behind,
> Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
> The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
> In am'rous ditties all a summer's day;
> While smooth Adonis from his native rock

Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded, the love tale
Infected Sion's daughter with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel saw; when, by the vision led,
His eyes survey'd the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah———"

The reader will pardon me if I insert as a note on this beautiful passage, the account given us by the late ingenious Mr. Maundrell of this ancient piece of worship, and probably the first occasion of such a superstition. "We came to a fair large river; doubtless the ancient river Adonis, as famous for the idolatrous rites performed here in lamentation of Adonis. We had the fortune to see what may be supposed to be the occasion of that opinion which Lucian relates concerning this river, viz. That this stream, at certain seasons of the year, especially about the feast of Adonis, is of a bloody colour; which the heathens looked upon as proceeding from a kind of sympathy in the river, of the death of Adonis, who was killed by a wild boar in the mountains, out of which this stream rises. Something like this we saw actually come to pass; for the water was stained to a surprising redness: and, as we observed in travelling, had discoloured the sea a great way into a reddish hue, occasioned doubtless by a sort of minium, or red earth, washed into the river by the violence of the rain, and not by any stain from Adonis's blood."

The passage in the catalogue, explaining the manner how spirits transform themselves by contraction or enlargement of their dimensions,

is introduced with great judgment, to make way for several surprising accidents in the sequel of the poem. There follows one at the very end of the first book, which is what the French critics call marvellous, but at the same time probable, by reason of the passage last mentioned. As soon as the infernal palace is finished, we are told the multitude and rabble of spirits immediately shrunk themselves into a small compass, that there might be room for such a numberless assembly in this capacious hall. But it is the poet's refinement upon this thought which I most admire, and which indeed is very noble in itself. For he tells us, that notwithstanding the vulgar among the fallen spirits contracted their forms, those of the first rank and dignity still preserved their natural dimensions:

> Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
> Reduc'd their shapes immense, and were at large
> Though without number, still amidst the hall
> Of that infernal court. But far within,
> And in their own dimensions like themselves
> The great seraphic lords and cherubim
> In close recess and secret conclave sat,
> A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
> Frequent and full———

The character of Mammon, and the description of the Pandæmonium, are full of beauties.

There are several other strokes in the first book wonderfully poetical, and instances of that sublime genius so peculiar to the author. Such is the description of Azazel's stature, and the infernal standard which he unfurls, as also of that ghastly light by which the fiends appear to one another in their place of torments:

The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimm'ring of those livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful——

The shout of the whole host of fallen angels when draw up in battle array:

——The universal host up sent
A shout that tore hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.

The review, which the leader makes of his infernal army:

——— He through the armed files
Darts his experienc'd eye, and soon traverse
The whole battalion views, their order due,
Their visages and stature as of gods,
Their number last he sums; and now his heart
Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength
Glories———

The flash of light which appeared upon the drawing of their swords:

He spake; and to confirm his words out flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumin'd hell.——

The sudden production of the Pandæmonium:

Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet.

The artificial illuminations made in it:

———From the arch'd roof
Pendent, by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
With a Naphtha and Asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky.———

There are also several noble similes and allusions in the first book of Paradise Lost. And here I must observe, that when Milton alludes either to things or persons, he never quits his simile until it rises to some very great idea, which is often foreign to the occasion that gave birth to it. The resemblance does not, perhaps, last above a line or two, but the poet runs on with the hint until he has raised out of it some glorious image or sentiment, proper to inflame the mind of the reader, and to give it that sublime kind of entertainment which is suitable to the nature of an heroic poem. Those who are acquainted with Homer's and Virgil's way of writing, cannot but be pleased with this kind of structure in Milton's similitudes. I am the more particular on this head, because ignorant readers, who have formed their taste upon the quaint similes and little turns of wit, which are so much in vogue among modern poets, cannot relish these beauties, which are of a much higher nature, and are therefore apt to censure Milton's comparisons, in which they do not see any surprising points of likeness. Monsieur Perrault was a man of this vitiated relish, and for that very reason has endeavoured to turn into ridicule several of Homer's similitudes, which he calls "*comparaisons à longue queue*," "long-tailed comparisons." I shall conclude this paper on the first book of Milton with the answer which Monsieur Boileau makes to Perrault on this occasion: "Comparisons," says he, "in odes and epic poems, are not introduced only to illustrate and embellish the discourse, but to amuse

Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
The monster, moving onward, came as fast
With horrid strides; hell trembled as he strode.
Th' undaunted fiend what this might be admir'd,
Admir'd, not fear'd,——

The same boldness and intrepidity of behaviour discovers itself in the several adventures which he meets with, during his passage through the regions of unformed matter, and particularly in his address to those tremendous powers who are described as presiding over it.

The part of Moloch is likewise, in all its circumstances, full of that fire and fury which distinguish this spirit from the rest of the fallen angels. He is described in the first book as besmeared with the blood of human sacrifices, and delighted with the tears of parents and the cries of children. In the second book he is marked out as the fiercest spirit that fought in heaven; and if we consider the figure which he makes in the sixth book, where the battle of the angels is described, we find it every way answerable to the same furious, enraged character:

——Where the might of Gabriel fought,
And with fierce ensigns pierc'd the deep array
Of Moloch, furious king, who him defy'd,
And at his chariot-wheels to drag him bound
Threaten'd, nor from the Holy One of heav'n
Refrain'd his tongue blasphemous; but anon,
Down cloven to the waist, with shatter'd arms
And uncouth pain, fled bellowing.

It may be worth while to observe, that Milton has represented this violent impetuous spirit, who is hurried on by such precipitate passions, as the first that rises in the assembly to give his

opinion upon their present posture of affairs. Accordingly he declares himself abruptly for war, and appears incensed at his companions for losing so much time as even to deliberate upon it. All his sentiments are rash, audacious, and desperate. Such as that of arming themselves with their tortures, and turning their punishments upon him who inflicted them:

> ——No, let us rather choose,
> Arm'd with hell flames and fury, all at once
> O'er heaven's high tow'rs to force resistless way,
> Turning our tortures into horrid arms
> Against the tort'rer: when to meet the noise
> Of his almighty engine he shall hear
> Infernal thunder, and for lightning see
> Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
> Among his angels: and his throne itself
> Mix'd with Tartarian sulphur, and strange fire,
> His own invented torments.——

His preferring annihilation to shame or misery is also highly suitable to his character; as the comfort he draws from their disturbing the peace of heaven, that if it be not victory it is revenge, is a sentiment truly diabolical, and becoming the bitterness of this implacable spirit.

Belial is described in the first book as the idol of the lewd and luxurious. He is in the second book, pursuant to that description, characterized as timorous and slothful; and if we look into the sixth book, we find him celebrated in the battle of angels for nothing but that scoffing speech which he makes to Satan, on their supposed advantage over the enemy. As his appearance is uniform, and of a piece, in these three several views, we find his sentiments, in the in-

fernal assembly every way conformable to his character. Such are his apprehensions of a second battle, his horrors of annihilation, his preferring to be miserable, rather than "not to be." I need not observe, that the contrast of thought in this speech, and that which precedes it, gives an agreeable variety to the debate.

Mammon's character is so fully drawn in the first book, that the poet adds nothing to it in the second. We were before told, that he was the first who taught mankind to ransack the earth for gold and silver, and that he was the architect of Pandæmonium, or the infernal palace, where the evil spirits were to meet in council. His speech in this book is every way suitable to so depraved a character. How proper is that reflection of their being unable to taste the happiness of heaven, were they actually there, in the mouth of one, who, while he was in heaven, is said to have had his mind dazzled with the outward pomps and glories of the place, and to have been more intent on the riches of the pavement than on the beatific vision. I shall also leave the reader to judge how agreeable the following sentiments are to the same character:

—This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark doth heav'n's all ruling sire
Choose to reside, his glory unobscur'd,
And with the majesty of darkness round
Covers his throne, from whence deep thunders roar,
Mustering their rage, and heaven resembles hell!
As he our darkness, cannot we his light
Imitate when we please? This desert soil
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can heav'n show more?

Beelzebub, who is reckoned the second in dignity that fell, and is, in the first book, the second that awakens out of the trance, and confers with Satan upon the situation of their affairs, maintains his rank in the book now before us. There is a wonderful majesty described in his rising up to speak. He acts as a kind of moderator between the two opposite parties, and proposes a third undertaking, which the whole assembly gives into. The motion he makes of detaching one of their body in search of a new world, is grounded upon a project devised by Satan, and cursorily proposed by him in the following lines of the first book:

> Space may produce new worlds, whereof so rife
> There went a fame in heaven, that he ere long
> Intended to create, and therein plant
> A generation whom his choice regard
> Should favour equal to the sons of heav'n;
> Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
> Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere:
> For this infernal pit shall never hold
> Celestial spirits in bondage, nor the abyss
> Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
> Full counsel must mature:—

It is on this project that Beelzebub grounds his proposal:

> ——What if we find
> Some easier enterprise? There is a place
> (If ancient and prophetic fame in heav'n
> Err not), another world, the happy seat
> Of some new race call'd man, about this time
> To be created like to us, though less
> In pow'r and excellence, but favour'd more
> Of him who rules above; so was his will
> Pronounc'd among the gods, and by an oath,
> That shook heav'n's whole circumference, confirm'd.

The reader may observe how just it was, not to omit in the first book the project upon which the whole poem turns: as also that the prince of the fallen angels was the only proper person to give it birth, and that the next to him in dignity was the fittest to second and support it.

There is besides, I think, something wonderfully beautiful, and very apt to affect the reader's imagination, in this ancient prophecy or report in heaven, concerning the creation of man. Nothing could show more dignity of the species than this tradition which ran of them before their existence. They are represented to have been the talk of heaven before they were create. Virgil, in compliment to the Roman commonwealth, makes the heroes of it appear in their state of pre-existence; but Milton does a far greater honour to mankind in general, as he gives us a glimpse of them even before they are in being.

The rising of this great assembly is described in a very sublime and poetical manner:

> Their rising all at once was as the sound
> Of thunder heard remote———

The diversions of the fallen angels, with the particular account of their place of habitation, are described with great pregnancy of thought, and copiousness of invention. The diversions are every way suitable to beings who had nothing left them but strength and knowledge, misapplied. Such are their contentions at the race, and in feats of arms, with their entertainment in the following lines:

Others with vast Typhœan rage more fell
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air.
In whirlwind; hell scarce holds the wild uproar.

Their music is employed in celebrating their own criminal exploits, and their discourse in sounding the unfathomable depths of fate, free-will. and foreknowledge.

The several circumstances in the description of hell are finely imagined; as the four rivers which disgorge themselves into the sea of fire, the extremes of cold and heat, and the river of oblivion. The monstrous animals produced in that infernal world are represented by a single line, which gives us a more horrid idea of them, than a much longer description would have done:

—Nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
Gorgons and hydras, and chimeras dire.

This episode of the fallen spirits, and their place of habitation, comes in very happily to unbend the mind of the reader from its attention to the debate. An ordinary poet would indeed have spun out so many circumstances to a great length, and by that means have weakened, instead of illustrated, the principal fable.

The flight of Satan to the gates of hell is finely imagined.

I have already declared my opinion of the allegory concerning sin and death, which is, however, a very finished piece in its kind, when it is not considered as a part of an epic poem.

The genealogy of the several persons is contrived with great delicacy. Sin is the daughter of Satan, and Death the offspring of Sin. The incestuous mixture between Sin and Death produces those monsters and hell-hounds which from time to time enter into their mother, and tear the bowels of her who gave them birth.

These are the terrors of an evil conscience, and the proper fruits of sin, which naturally rise from the apprehensions of death. This last beautiful moral is, I think, clearly intimated in the speech of Sin, where, complaining of this her dreadful issue, she adds

> Before mine eyes in opposition sits
> Grim death, my son and foe, who sets them on,
> And me his parent would full soon devour
> For want of other prey, but that he knows
> His end with mine involv'd———

I need not mention to the reader the beautiful circumstance in the last part of this quotation. He will likewise observe how naturally the three persons concerned in this allegory are tempted by one common interest to enter into a confederacy together, and how properly Sin is made the portress of hell, and the only being that can open the gates to that world of tortures.

The descriptive part of this allegory is likewise very strong, and full of sublime ideas. The figure of Death, the regal crown upon his head, his menace of Satan, his advancing to the combat, the outcry at his birth, are circumstances too noble to be past over in silence, and extremely suitable to this king of terrors. I need

not mention the justness of thought which is observed in the generation of these several symbolical persons; that Sin was produced upon the first revolt of Satan, that Death appeared soon after he was cast into hell, and that the terrors of conscience were conceived at the gate of this place of torments. The description of the gates is very poetical, as the opening of them is full of Milton's spirit:

> —On a sudden open fly,
> With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
> Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
> Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
> Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
> Excell'd her pow'r; the gates wide open stood,
> That with extended wings a banner'd host
> Under spread ensigns marching might pass through,
> With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
> So wide they stood, and like a furnace mouth
> Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.

In Satan's voyage through the chaos there are several imaginary persons described, as residing in that immense waste of matter. This may perhaps be conformable to the taste of those critics who are pleased with nothing in a poet which has not life and manners ascribed to it; but for my own part, I am pleased most with those passages in this description which carry in them a greater measure of probability, and are such as might possibly have happened. Of this kind is his first mounting in the smoke that rises from the infernal pit, his falling into a cloud of nitre, and the like combustible materials, that by their explosion still hurried him forward in his voyage; his springing upward like a pyramid of fire, with his laborious passage

through that confusion of elements which the poet calls:

> The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave.

The glimmering light which shot into the chaos from the utmost verge of the creation, with the distant discovery of the earth that hung close by the moon, are wonderfully beautiful and poetical —L.

PAPER IX.

Nec Deus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus
Inciderit———— HOR. ARS. POET. v. 191.

Never presume to make a god appear.
But for a business worthy of a god.=ROSCOMMON.

HORACE advises a poet to consider thoroughly the nature and force of his genius. Milton seems to have known perfectly well wherein his strength lay, and has therefore chosen a subject entirely conformable to those talents of which he was master. As his genius was wonderfully turned to the sublime, his subject was the noblest that could have entered into the thoughts of man. Every thing that is truly great and astonishing has a place in it. The whole system of the intellectual world; the chaos, and the creation; heaven earth, and hell; enter into the constitution of his poem.

Having in the first and second books represented the infernal world with all its horrors, the thread of his fable naturally leads him into the opposite regions of bliss and glory.

If Milton's majesty forsakes him any where, it

is in those parts of his poem where the divine persons are introduced as speakers. One may, I think, observe, that the author proceeds with a kind of fear and trembling, whilst he describes the sentiments of the Almighty. He dares not give his imagination its full play, but chooses to confine himself to such thoughts as are drawn from the books of the most orthodox divines, and to such expressions as may be met with in Scripture. The beauties, therefore, which we are to look for in these speeches, are not of a poetical nature, nor so proper to fill the mind with sentiments of grandeur, as with thoughts of devotion. The passions which they are designed to raise, are a divine love and religious fear. The particular beauty of the speeches in the third book, consists in that shortness and perspicuity of style, in which the poet has couched the greatest mysteries of Christianity, and drawn together in a regular scheme, the whole dispensation of Providence with respect to man. He has represented all the abstruse doctrines of predestination, free-will, and grace, as also the great points of the incarnation and redemption (which naturally grow up in a poem that treats of the fall of man,) with great energy of expression, and in a clearer and stronger light than I ever met with in any other writer. As these points are dry in themselves to the generality of readers, the concise and clear manner in which he has treated them is very much to be admired, as is likewise that particular art which he has made use of in the interspersing of all those graces of poetry which the subject was capable of receiving.

The survey of the whole creation, and of every thing that is transacted in it, is a prospect worthy of Omniscience, and as much above that in which Virgil has drawn his Jupiter, as the Christian idea of the Supreme Being is more rational and sublime than that of the Heathens. The particular objects on which he is described to have cast his eye, are represented in the most beautiful and lively manner:

> Now had th' Almighty Father from above
> (From the pure empyrean where he sits
> High thron'd above all height) bent down his eye,
> His own works and their works at once to view.
> About him all the sanctities of heaven
> Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd
> Beatitude past utt'rance. On his right
> The radiant image of his glory sat,
> His only Son. On earth he first beheld
> Our two first parents, yet the only two
> Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd,
> Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love:
> Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,
> In blissful solitude. He then survey'd
> Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
> Coasting the wall of heav'n on this side night
> In the dull air sublime; and ready now
> To stoop with varied wings and willing feet
> On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd
> Firm land imbosom'd without firmament;
> Uncertain which, in ocean, or in air.
> Him God beholding from his prospect high,
> Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,
> Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake.

Satan's approach to the confines of the creation is finely imaged in the beginning of the speech which immediately follows. The effects of this speech on the blessed spirits, and the divine person to whom it was addressed, cannot but fill the mind of the reader with a secret pleasure and complacency:

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
All heav'n, and in the blessed spirits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd.
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most Glorious: in him all his Father shone
Substantially expressed; and in his face
Divine compassion visibly appear'd;
Love without end, and without measure grace.

I need not point out the beauty of that circumstance, wherein the whole host of angels are represented as standing mute; nor show how proper the occasion was to produce such a silence in heaven. The close of this divine colloquy, with the hymn of angels that follows upon it, are so wonderfully beautiful and poetical, that I should not forbear inserting the whole passage, if the bounds of my paper would give me leave:

No sooner had the Almighty ceas'd but all
The multitude of angels with a shout!
(Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices) utt'ring joy, heav'n rung
With jubilee, and loud hosannas fill'd
Th' eternal regions, &c. &c.——

Satan's walk upon the outside of the universe, which at a distance appeared to him of a globular form, but upon his nearer approach looked like an unbounded plain, is natural and noble; as his roaming upon the frontiers of the creation, between that mass of matter which was wrought into a world and that shapeless unformed heap of materials which still lay in chaos and confusion, strikes the imagination with something astonishingly great and wild. I have before spoken of the Limbo of Vanity, which the poet places upon this outermost surface of the universe, and shall

here explain myself more at large on that and other parts of the poem, which are of the same shadowy nature.

Aristotle observes that the fable of an epic poem should abound in circumstances that are both credible and astonishing; or, as the French critics choose to phrase it, the fable should be filled with the probable and the marvellous. This rule is as fine and just as any in Aristotle's whole Art of Poetry.

If the fable is only probable, it differs nothing from a true history; if it is only marvellous, it is no better than a romance. The great secret, therefore, of heroic poetry, is to relate such circumstances as may produce in the reader at the same time both belief and astonishment. This is brought to pass in a well-chosen fable, by the account of such things as have really happened, or at least of such things as have happened according to the received opinions of mankind. Milton's fable is a master-piece of this nature: as the war in heaven, the condition of the fallen angels, the state of innocence, the temptation of the serpent and the fall of man; though they are very astonishing in themselves, and are not only credible, but actual points of faith.

The next method of reconciling miracles with credibility, is by a happy invention of the poet; as in particular, when he introduces agents of a superior nature, who are capable of effecting what is wonderful, and what is not to be met with in the ordinary course of things. Ulysses' ship being turned into a rock, and Æneas's fleet into a shoal of water nymphs, though they are very

surprising accidents, are nevertheless probable when we are told, that they were the gods who thus transformed them. It is this kind of machinery which fills the poems both of Homer and Virgil with such circumstances as are wonderful but not impossible, and so frequently produce in the reader the most pleasing passion that can rise in the mind of man, which is admiration. If there be any instance in the Æneid liable to exception upon this account, it is in the beginning of the third book, were Æneas is represented as tearing up the myrtle that dropped blood. To qualify this wonderful circumstance, Polydorus tells a story from the root of the myrtle, that the barbarous inhabitants of the country having pierced him with spears and arrows, the wood which was left in his body took root in his wounds, and gave birth to that bleeding tree. This circumstance seems to have the marvellous without the probable, because it is represented as proceeding from natural causes, without the interposition of any god, or other supernatural power capable of producing it The spears and arrows grow of themselves, without so much as the modern help of enchantment. If we look into the fiction of Milton's fable though we find it full of surprising incidents, they are generally suited to our notions of the things and persons described, and tempered with a due measure of probability. I must only make an exception to the Limbo of Vanity, with his episode of Sin and Death, and some of the imaginary persons in his chaos. These passages are astonishing,

but not credible; the reader cannot so far impose upon himself as to see a possibility in them; they are the description of dreams and shadows, not of things or persons. I know that many critics look upon the stories of Circe, Polyphemne, the Sirens, nay the whole Odyssey and Iliad, to be allegories: but allowing this to be true, they are fables, which, considering the opinions of mankind that prevailed in the age of the poet, might possibly have been according to the letter. The persons are such as might have acted what is ascribed to them, as the circumstances in which they are represented might possibly have been truths and realities. This appearance of probability is so absolutely requisite in the greater kinds of poetry, that Aristotle observes the ancient tragic writers made use of the names of such great men as had actually lived in the world, though the tragedy proceeded upon adventures they were never engaged in, on purpose to make the subject more credible. In a word, besides the hidden meaning of an epic allegory, the plain literal sense ought to appear probable. The story should be such as an ordinary reader may acquiesce in, whatever natural, moral, or political truth may be discovered in it by men of greater penetration.

Satan, after having long wandered upon the surface, or outmost wall of the universe, discovers at last a wide gap in it, which led into the creation, and is described as the opening through which the angels pass to and fro into the lower world, upon their errands to mankind. His sitting upon the brink of this passage, and taking

a survey of the whole face of nature that appeared to him new and fresh in all its beauties, with the simile illustrating the circumstance, fills the mind of the reader with as surprising and glorious an idea as any that arises in the whole poem. He looks down into that vast hollow of the universe with the eye, or (as Milton calls it in his first book) with the ken of an angel. He surveys all the wonders in the immense amphitheatre that lie between both the poles of heaven, and takes in at one view the whole round of the creation.

His flight between the several worlds that shined on every side of him, with the particular description of the sun, are set forth in all the wantonness of a luxuriant imagination. His shape, speech, and behaviour upon his transforming himself into an angel of light, are touched with exquisite beauty. The poet's thoughts of directing Satan to the sun, which, in the vulgar opinion of mankind, is the most conspicuous part of the creation, and the placing in it an angel, is a circumstance very finely contrived, and the more adjusted to a poetical probability; as it was a received doctrine among the most famous philosophers, that every orb had its intelligence; and as an apostle in sacred writ is said to have seen such an angel in the sun. In the answer which this angel returns to the disguised evil spirit, there is such a becoming majesty as is altogether suitable to a superior being. The part of it in which he represents himself as present at the creation, is very noble in itself, and not only proper where it is introduced, but requisite to prepare the reader for what follows in the seventh book:

I saw when at his word the formless mass
This world's material mould, came to a heap.
Confusion heard his voice, and wild Uproar
Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd,
Till at his second bidding Darkness fled,
Light shone, &c.

In the following part of the speech he points out the earth with such circumstances, that the reader can scarce forbear fancying himself employed on the same distant view of it.

Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
That place is earth, the seat of man, that light
His day, &c.

I must not conclude my reflections upon this third book of Paradise Lost, without taking notice of that celebrated complaint of Milton with which it opens, and which certainly deserves all the praises that have been given it; though as I have before hinted, it may rather be looked upon as an excrescence, than as an essential part of the poem. The same observation might be applied to that beautiful digression upon hypocrisy in the same book.

PAPER X.

Nec satis est pulchra esse poemata, dulcia sunto.

HOR. ARS. POET. v. 99.

'Tis not enough a poem's finely writ,
It must affect and captivate the soul.

THOSE who know how many volumes have been written on the poems of Homer and Virgil will easily pardon the length of my discourse upon

Milton. The Paradise Lost, is looked upon, by the best judges as the greatest production, or at least the noblest work of genius, in our language, and therefore deserves to be set before an English reader in its full beauty. For this reason, though I have endeavoured to give a general idea of its graces and imperfections in my first six papers, I thought myself obliged to bestow one upon every book in particular. The first three books I have already dispatched, and am now entering upon the fourth. I need not acquaint my reader that there are multitudes of beauties in this great author, especially in the descriptive parts of this poem, which I have not touched upon; it being my intention to point out those only which appear to be the most exquisite, or those which are not so obvious to ordinary readers. Every one that has read the critics who have written upon the Odyssey, the Iliad, and the Æneid, knows very well, that though they agree in their opinions of the great beauties in those poems, they have nevertheless each of them discovered several masterstrokes, which have escaped the observation of the rest. In the same manner, I question not but any writer who shall treat of this subject after me, may find several beauties in Milton, which I have not taken notice of. I must likewise observe, that as the greatest masters of critical learning differ among one another, as to some particular points in an epic poem, I have not bound myself scrupulously to the rules which any of them have laid down upon that art, but have taken the liberty sometimes to join with

one, and sometimes with another, and sometimes to differ from all of them, when I have thought that the reason of the thing was on my side.

We may conclude the beauties of the fourth book under three heads. In the first are those pictures of still-life, which we meet with in the description of Eden, Paradise, Adam's Bower, &c. In the next are the machines, which comprehend the speeches and behaviour of the good and bad angels. In the last is the conduct of Adam and Eve, who are the principal actors in the poem.

In the description of Paradise, the poet has observed Aristotle's rule of lavishing all the ornaments of diction on the weak inactive parts of the fable which are not supported by the beauty of sentiments and characters. Accordingly the reader may observe, that the expressions are more florid and elaborate in these descriptions, than in most other parts of the poem. I must further add, that though the drawings of gardens, rivers, rainbows, and the like dead pieces of nature, are justly censured in an heroic poem, when they run out into an unnecessary length—the description of paradise would have been faulty, had not the poet been very particular in it, not only as it is the scene of the principal action, but as it is requisite to give us an idea of that happiness from which our first parents fell. The plan of it is wonderfully beautiful, and formed upon the short sketch which we have of it in holy writ. Milton's exuberance of imagination has poured forth such a redundancy of ornaments on this seat of happiness and innocence, that it would be endless to point out each particular.

I must not quit this head without further observing, that there is scarce a speech of Adam or Eve in the whole poem, wherein the sentiments and allusions are not taken from this their delightful habitation. The reader, during their whole course of action, always finds himself in the walks of Paradise. In short, as the critics have remarked, that in those poems wherein shepherds are the actors, the thoughts ought always to take a tincture from the woods, fields, and rivers; so we may observe, that our first parents seldom lose sight of their happy station in any thing they speak or do; and if the reader will give me leave to use the expression, that their thoughts are always "paradisaical."

We are in the next place to consider the machines of the fourth book. Satan being now within prospect of Eden, and looking round upon the glories of the creation, is filled with sentiments different from those which he discovered whilst he was in hell. The place inspires him with thoughts more adapted to it. He reflects upon the happy condition from whence he fell, and breaks forth into a speech that is softened with several transient touches of remorse and self-accusation: but at length he confirms himself in impenitence, and in his design of drawing man into his own state of guilt and misery. This conflict of passions is raised with a great deal of art, as the opening of his speech to the sun is very bold and noble:

> O thou that, with surprising glory crown'd,
> Look'st from thy sole dominion like the god
> Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
> Hide their diminished heads; to thee I call,

But with no friendly voice: and add thy name,
O Sun! to tell thee how I hate the beams,
That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere.

This speech is, I think, the finest that is ascribed to Satan in the whole poem. The evil spirit afterward proceeds to make his discoveries concerning our first parents, and to learn after what manner they may be best attacked. His bounding over the walls of Paradise; his sitting in the shape of a cormorant upon the tree of life, which stood in the centre of it, and overtopped all the other trees of the garden; his alighting among the herd of animals, which are so beautifully represented as playing about Adam and Eve, together with his transforming himself into different shapes, in order to hear their conversation; are circumstances that give an agreeable surprise to the reader, and are devised with great art, to connect that series of adventures in which the poet has engaged this artificer of fraud.

The thought of Satan's transformation into a cormorant, and placing himself on the tree of life, seems raised upon that passage in the Iliad, where two deities are described as perching on the top of an oak in the shape of vultures.

His planting himself at the ear of Eve under the form of a toad, in order to produce vain dreams and imaginations, is a circumstance of the same nature: as his starting up in his own form is wonderfully fine, both in the literal description, and in the moral which is concealed under it. His answer upon his being discovered, and demanded to give an account of himself, is

conformable to the pride and intrepidity of his character:

> "Know ye not, then," said Satan, fill'd with scorn,
> "Know ye not me? Ye knew me once no mate
> For you, there sitting where you durst not soar;
> Not to know me argues yourself unknown,
> The lowest of your throng.

Zephon's rebuke, with the influence it had on Satan, is exquisitely graceful and moral. Satan is afterward led away to Gabriel, the chief of the guardian angels, who kept watch in Paradise. His disdainful behaviour on this occasion is so remarkable a beauty, that the most ordinary reader cannot but take notice of it. Gabriel's discovering his approach at a distance is drawn with great strength and liveliness of imagination:

> O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet
> Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
> Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade,
> And with them comes a third of regal port
> But faded splendour wan; who by his gait
> And fierce demeanour seems the prince of hell,
> Not likely to part hence without contest;
> Stand firm, for in his look defiance lowrs.

The conference between Gabriel and Satan abounds with sentiments proper for the occasion, and suitable to the persons of the two speakers. Satan clothing himself with terror when he prepares for the combat is truly sublime, and at least equal to Homer's description of Discord, celebrated by Longinus, or to that of Fame in Virgil, who are both represented with their feet standing upon the earth, and their heads reaching above the clouds:

Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd;
For contemplation he and valour form'd,
For softness she and sweet attractive grace,
He for God only, she for God in him.
His fair large front, and eye sublime, declared
Absolute rule: and hyacinthian locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad.
She, as a veil, down to her slender waist
Her unadorned golden tresses wore,
Dishevell'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd.—
So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
Of God or angel, for they thought no ill:
So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair
That ever since in love's embraces met.

There is a fine spirit of poetry in the lines which follow, wherein they are described as sitting on a bed of flowers by the side of a fountain, amidst a mixed assembly of animals.

The speeches of these two first lovers flow equally from passion and sincerity. The professions they make to one another are full of warmth; but at the same time founded on truth. In a word, they are the gallantries of Paradise:

—When Adam, first of men
"Sole partner and sole part of all these joys,
Dearer thyself than all;————
But let us ever praise Him, and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task,
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flow'rs,
Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet."
To whom thus Eve reply'd: "O thou for whom,
And from whom, I was form'd, flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom am to no end, my guide
And head, what thou hast said is just and right,
For we to Him indeed all praises owe,
And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thyself canst no where find," &c.

The remaining part of Eve's speech, in which

she gives an account of herself upon her first creation, and the manner in which she was brought to Adam, is, I think, as beautiful a passage as any in Milton, or perhaps in any other poet whatsoever. These passages are all worked off with so much art, that they are capable of pleasing the most delicate reader without offending the most severe.

"That day I oft remember, when from sleep," &c.

A poet of less judgment and invention than this great author, would have found it very difficult to have filled these tender parts of the poem with sentiments proper for a state of innocence; to have described the warmth of love, and the professions of it, without artifice or hyperbole; to have made the man speak the most endearing things without descending from his natural dignity, and the woman receiving them without departing from the modesty of her character; in a word, to adjust the prerogatives of wisdom and beauty, and make each appear to the other in its proper force and loveliness. This mutual subordination of the two sexes is wonderfully kept up in the whole poem, as particularly in the speech of Eve I have before mentioned, and upon the conclusion of it in the following lines:

So spake our general mother, and with eyes
Of conjugal attraction unreprov'd
And meek surrender, half-embracing lean'd
On our first father; half her swelling breast
Naked met his under the flowing gold
Of her loose tresses hid; he in delight
Both of her beauty and submissive charms
Smil'd with superior love.——

The poet adds, that the devil turned away with envy at the sight of so much happiness.

We have another view of our first parents in their evening discourses, which is full of pleasing images and sentiments suitable to their condition and characters. The speech of Eve in particular, is dressed up in such a soft and natural turn of words and sentiments, as cannot be sufficiently admired.

I shall close my reflections upon this book with observing the masterly transition which the poet makes to their evening worship in the following lines:

> Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood,
> Both turned, and under open sky ador'd
> The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heav'n,
> Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
> And starry pole: "Thou also mad'st the night,
> Maker omnipotent, and thou the day," &c.

Most of the modern heroic poets have imitated the ancients, in beginning a speech without premising that the person said thus or thus; but as it is easy to imitate the ancients in the omission of two or three words, it requires judgment to do it in such a manner as that they shall not be missed, and that the speech may begin naturally without them. There is a fine instance of this kind out of Homer, in the twenty-third chapter of Longinus.—L.

PAPER XI.

—*Major rerum mihi nascitur ordo.*—VIRG. ÆN. VII. 48.

A larger scene of action is display'd.—DRYDEN.

WE were told in the foregoing book, how the evil spirit practised upon Eve as she lay asleep, in order to inspire her with thoughts of vanity, pride, and ambition. The author who shows a wonderful art throughout his whole poem, for preparing the reader for the several occurrences that arise in it, founds, upon the above-mentioned circumstances, the first part of the fifth book. Adam, upon his awaking, finds Eve still asleep, with an unusual discomposure in her looks. The posture in which he regards her is described with a tenderness not to be expressed, as the whisper with which he awakens her is the softest that ever was conveyed to a lover's ear.

His wonder was, to find awaken'd Eve
With tresses discompos'd, and glowing cheek,
As through unquiet rest; he, on his side
Leaning half-raised, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then, with voice
Mild as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus: "Awake
My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
Heav'n's last best gift, my ever new delight
Awake: the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us: we lose the prime, to mark how spring
Our tender plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed;
How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom, extracting liquid sweet."
Such whispering wak'd her, but with startled eye
On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake;
"O sole, in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My glory, my perfection! glad I see
Thy face, and morn return'd——."

I cannot but take notice, that Milton, in the conferences between Adam and Eve, had his eye very much upon the book of Canticles, in which there is a noble spirit of eastern poetry, and very often not unlike what we meet with in Homer, who is generally placed near the age of Solomon. I think there is no question but the poet in the preceding speech remembered those two passages which are spoken on the like occasion, and filled with the same pleasing images of nature.

"My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away! for, lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away!

"Come, my beloved! let us go forth into the field, let us get up early into the vineyards, let us see whether the vine flourish, whether the tender grapes appear, and the pomegranates bud forth."

His preferring the garden of Eden to that

> ——————Where the sapient king
> Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse,

shows that the poet had this delightful scene in his mind.

Eve's dream is full of those high conceits engendering pride, which, we are told, the devil endeavoured to instil into her. Of this kind is

that part of it where she fancies herself awakened by Adam in the following beautiful lines:

"Why sleep'st thou, Eve? Now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake
Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song; now reigns
Full-orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
Shadowy sets off the face of things. In vain,
If none regard. Heav'n wakes with all his eyes
Whom to behold but thee, nature's desire,
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment,
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze."

An injudicious poet would have made Adam talk through the whole work in such sentiments as these: but flattery and falsehood are not the courtship of Milton's Adam, and could not be heard by Eve in her state of innocence, excepting only in a dream produced on purpose to taint her imagination. Other vain sentiments of the same kind, in this relation of her dream, will be obvious to every reader. Though the catastrophe of the poem is finely presaged on this occasion, the particulars of it are so artfully shadowed, that they do not anticipate the story which follows in the ninth book. I shall only add, that though the vision itself is founded upon truth, the circumstances of it are full of that wildness and inconsistency which are natural to a dream. Adam, conformable to his superior character for wisdom, instructs and comforts Eve upon this occasion:

So cheer'd he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd,
But silently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair;
Two other precious drops, that ready stood
Each in their crystal sluice, he, ere they fell,
Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended.

The morning hymn is written in imitation of one of those psalms where, in the overflowings of gratitude and praise, the Psalmist calls not only upon the angels, but upon the most conspicuous parts of the inanimate creation to join with him in extolling their common Maker. Invocations of this nature fill the mind with glorious ideas of God's works, and awaken that divine enthusiasm which is so natural to devotion. But if this calling upon the dead parts of nature is at all times a proper kind of worship, it was in a particular manner suitable to our first parents, who had the creation fresh upon their minds, and had not seen the various dispensations of Providence, nor consequently could be acquainted with those many topics of praise which might afford matter to the devotions of their posterity. I need not remark the beautiful spirit of poetry which runs through the whole hymn, nor the holiness of that resolution with which it concludes.

Having already mentioned those speeches which are assigned to the persons in this poem, I proceed to the description which the poet gives us of Raphael. His departure from before the throne, and his flight through the choirs of angels, is finely imagined. As Milton every where fills his poem with circumstances that are marvellous and astonishing, he describes the gate of heaven as framed after such a manner, that it opened of itself upon the approach of the angel who was to pass through it.

> ——Till at the gate
> Of heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-open'd wide,
> On golden hinges turning, as by work
> Divine, the sovereign Architect had fram'd.

The poet here seems to have regarded two or three passages in the 18th Iliad, as that in particular where, speaking of Vulcan, Homer says, that he had made twenty tripods running on golden wheels; which, upon occasion, might go of themselves to the assembly of the gods, and, when there was no more use for them, return again after the same manner. Scaliger has rallied Homer very severely upon this point, as M. Dacier has endeavoured to defend it. I will not pretend to determine whether, in this particular of Homer, the marvellous does not lose sight of the probable. As the miraculous workmanship of Milton's gates is not so extraordinary as this of the tripods, so I am persuaded he would not have mentioned it, had not he been supported in it by a passage in the Scripture, which speaks of wheels in heaven that had life in them, and moved of themselves, or stood still, in conformity with the cherubim whom they accompanied.

There is no question but Milton had this circumstance in his thoughts; because in the following book he describes the chariot of the Messiah with living wheels, according to the plan in Ezekiel's vision:—

> —Forth rushed with whirlwind sound
> The chariot of paternal Deity.
> Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
> Itself instinct with spirit.———

I question not but Bossu, and the two Daciers, who are for vindicating every thing that is censured in Homer, by something parallel in holy writ, would have been very well pleased had they

thought of confronting Vulcan's tripods with Ezekiel's wheels.

Raphael's descent to the earth, with the figure of his person, is represented in very lively colours. Several of the French, Italian, and English poets, have given a loose to their imaginations in the description of angels: but I do not remember to have met with any so finely drawn, and so conformable to the notions which are given of them in Scripture, as this in Milton. After having set him forth in all his heavenly plumage, and represented him as alighted upon the earth, the poet concludes his description with a circumstance which is altogether new, and imagined with the greatest strength of fancy:

> ———Like Maia's son he stood,
> And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
> The circuit wide———.

Raphael's reception by the guardian angels, his passing through the wilderness of sweets, his distant appearance to Adam, have all the graces that poetry is capable of bestowing. The author afterward gives us a particular description of Eve in her domestic employments:

> So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste
> She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent,
> What choice to choose for delicacy best,
> What order, so contrived, as not to mix
> Tastes not well join'd, inelegant, but bring
> Taste after taste, upheld with kindliest change;
> Bestirs her then, &c.

Though in this, and other parts of the same book, the subject is only the housewifery of our first parents, it is set off with many pleasing

images and strong expressions, as make it none of the least agreeable parts in this divine work.

The natural majesty of Adam, and, at the same time, his submissive behaviour to the superior being who had vouchsafed to be his guest; the solemn "hail" which the angel bestows upon the mother of mankind, with the figure of Eve ministering at the table; are circumstances which deserve to be admired.

Raphael's behaviour is every way suitable to the dignity of his nature, and to that character of a sociable spirit with which the author has so judiciously introduced him. He had received instructions to converse with Adam, as one friend converses with another, and to warn him of the enemy, who was contriving his destruction: accordingly, he is represented as sitting down at table with Adam, and eating of the fruits of Paradise. The occasion naturally leads him to his discourse on the food of angels. After having thus entered into conversation with man upon more indifferent subjects, he warns him of his obedience, and makes a natural transition to the history of that fallen angel who was employed in the circumvention of our first parents.

Had I followed Monsieur Bossu's method in my first paper on Milton, I shall have dated the action of Paradise Lost from the beginning of Raphael's speech in this book, as he supposes the action of the Æneid to begin in the second book of that poem. I could allege many reasons for my drawing the action of the Æneid rather from its immediate beginning in the first book, than from its remote beginning in the second; and

show why I have considered the sacking of Troy as an episode, according to the common acceptation of that word; But as this would be a dry unentertaining piece of criticism, and perhaps unnecessary to those who have read my first papers, I shall not enlarge upon it. Whichever of the notions be true, the unity of Milton's action is preserved according to either of them; whether we consider the fall of man in its immediate beginning, as proceeding from the resolutions taken in the infernal council, or in its more remote beginning, as proceeding from the first revolt of the angels in heaven. The occasion which Milton assigns for this revolt as it is founded on hints in holy writ, and on the opinion of some great writers, so it was the most proper that the poet could have made use of.

The revolt in heaven is described with great force of imagination, and a fine variety of circumstances. The learned reader cannot but be pleased with the poet's imitation of Homer in the last of the following lines:

> At length into the limits of the north
> They came, and Satan took his royal seat
> High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
> Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and tow'rs
> From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold,
> The palace of great Lucifer (so call'd
> That structure in the dialect of men
> Interpreted)———

Homer mentions persons and things, which, he tells us, in the language of the gods are called by different names from those they go by in the language of men. Milton has imitated him with his usual judgment in this particular place, wherein

he has likewise the authority of Scripture to justify him. The part of Abdiel, who was the only spirit that in this infinite host of Angels preserved his allegiance to his Maker, exhibits to us a noble moral of religious singularity. The zeal of the seraphim breaks forth in a becoming warmth of sentiments and expressions, as the character which is given us of him denotes that generous scorn and intrepidity which attend heroic virtue. The author, doubtless, designed it as a pattern to those who live among mankind in their present state of degeneracy and corruption:

So spake the seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he;
Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshaken, unseduc'd, unterrify'd;
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal:
Nor number nor example with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,
Long way thro' hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
Superior, nor of violence fear'd aught;
And, with retorted scorn, his back he turned
On those proud tow'rs to swift destruction doom'd.

L.

PAPER XII.

———*vocat in certamina divos*—VIRG.

He calls embattled deities to arms.

We are now entering upon the sixth book of Paradise Lost, in which the poet describes the battle of the angels; having raised his reader's expectation, and prepared him for it by several passages in the preceeding books. I omitted

quoting these passages in my observations on the former books, having purposely reserved them for the opening of this, the subject of which gave occasion to them. The author's imagination was so inflamed with this great scene of action, that wherever he speaks of it, he rises, if possible, above himself. Thus, where he mentions Satan in the beginning of his poem

> ———Him the Almighty power
> Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,
> With hideous ruin and combustion down
> To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
> In adamantine chains and penal fire—
> Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.

We have likewise several noble hints of it in the infernal conference.

> O prince! O chief of many-throned powers,
> That led th' embattled seraphim to war,
> Too well I see, and rue the dire event,
> That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
> Hath lost us heav'n; and all this mighty host
> In horrible destruction laid thus low.
> But see! the angry victor has recall'd
> His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
> Back to the gates of heav'n. The sulphurous hail
> Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
> The fiery surge, that from the precipice
> Of heav'n received us falling: and the thunder,
> Wing'd with red lightning, and impetuous rage,
> Perhaps has spent his shafts, and ceases now
> To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.

There are several other very sublime images on the same subject in the first book, as also in the second:

> What when we fled amain, pursued and struck
> With heav'n's afflicting thunder, and besought
> The deep to shelter us: this hell then seem'd
> A refuge from those wounds———

In short, the poet never mentions any thing of this battle, but in such images of greatness and terror as are suitable to the subject. Among several others I cannot forbear quoting that passage where the Power, who is described as presiding over Chaos, speaks in the second book.

> Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,
> With falt'ring speech and visage incompos'd,
> Answer'd, "I know thee, stranger, who thou art,
> That mighty leading angel, who of late
> Made head against heaven's King, tho' overthrown;
> I saw and heard; for such a num'rous host
> Fled not in silence through the frighted deep
> With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
> Confusion worse confounded; and heaven's gates
> Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
> Pursuing."———

It required great pregnancy of invention, and strength of imagination to fill this battle with such circumstances as should raise and astonish the mind of the reader; and at the same time an exactness of judgment, to avoid every thing that might appear light or trivial. Those who look into Homer are surprised to find his battles still rising one above another, and improving in horror to the conclusion of the Iliad. Milton's fight of angels is wrought up with the same beauty. It is ushered in with such signs of wrath as are suitable to Omnipotence incensed. The first engagement is carried on under a cope of fire, occasioned by the flights of innumerable burning darts and arrows which are discharged from either host. The second onset is still more terrible, as it is filled with those artificial thunders, which seem to make the victory doubtful, and produce a kind of consternation even in the good angels.

This is followed by the tearing up of mountains and promontories; till in the last place the Messiah comes forth in the fulness of majesty and terror. The pomp of his appearance, amidst the roarings of his thunder, the flashes of his lightning, and the noise of his chariot-wheels, is described with the utmost flights of human imagination.

There is nothing in the first and last day's engagement which does not appear natural, and agreeable enough to the ideas most readers would conceive of a fight between two armies of angels.

The second day's engagement is apt to startle an imagination which has not been raised and qualified for such a description, by the reading of the ancient poets, and of Homer in particular. It was certainly a very bold thought in our author, to ascribe the first use of artillery to the rebel angels. But as such a pernicious invention may be well supposed to have proceeded from such authors, so it enters very probably into the thoughts of that being, who is all along described as aspiring to the majesty of his Maker. Such engines were the only instruments he could have made use of to imitate those thunders, that in all poetry, both sacred and profane, are represented as the arms of the Almighty. The tearing up the hills was not altogether so daring a thought as the former. We are, in some measure, prepared for such an incident by the description of the giants' war, which we meet with among the ancient poets. What still made this circumstance the more proper for the poet's use, is the opinion of many learned men, that the fable of the giants'

war, which makes so great a noise in antiquity, and gave birth to the sublimest description in Hesiod's works, was an allegory, founded upon this very tradition of a fight between the good and bad angels.

It may, perhaps, be worth while to consider with what judgment Milton, in this narration, has avoided every thing that is mean and trivial in the descriptions of the Latin and Greek poets; and at the same time improved every great hint which he met with in their works upon this subject. Homer in that passage which Longinus has celebrated for its sublimeness, and which Virgil and Ovid have copied after him, tells us, that the giants threw Ossa upon Olympus, and Pelion upon Ossa. He adds an epithet to Pelion, which very much swells the idea, by bringing up to the reader's imagination all the woods that grew upon it. There is further a greater beauty in his singling out by name these three remarkable mountains, so well known to the Greeks. This last is such a beauty, as the scene of Milton's war could not possibly furnish him with. Claudian, in his fragment upon the giants' war, has given full scope to that wildness of imagination which was natural to him. He tells us that the giants tore up whole islands by the roots, and threw them at the gods. He describes one of them in particular, taking up Lemnos in his arms, and whirling it to the skies, with all Vulcan's shop in the midst of it. Another tears up Mount Ida, with the river Enipeus, which ran down the sides of it; but the poet, not content to describe him with this mountain upon his shoulders, tells

us that the river flowed down his back as he held it up in that posture. It is visible to every judicious reader that such ideas savour more of the burlesque than of the sublime. They proceed from a wantonness of imagination, and rather divert the mind than astonish it. Milton has taken every thing that is sublime in these several passages, and composes out of them the following great image:

> From their foundations loos'ning to and fro,
> They pluck'd the seated hills, with all their load,
> Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops
> Uplifting bore them in their hands.

We have the full majesty of Homer, in this short description, improved by the imagination of Claudian, without its puerilities.

I need not point out the description of the fallen angels seeing the promontories hanging over their heads in such a dreadful manner, with the other numberless beauties in this book, which are so conspicuous, that they cannot escape the notice of the most ordinary reader.

There are indeed so many wonderful strokes of poetry in this book, and such a variety of sublime ideas, that it would have been impossible to have given them a place within the bounds of this paper. Besides that I find it in a great measure done to my hand at the end of my Lord Roscommon's Essay on Translated Poetry. I shall refer my reader thither for some of the master-strokes of the sixth book of Paradise Lost, though at the same time there are many others which that noble author has not taken notice of.

Milton, notwithstanding the sublime genius he

was master of, has in this book drawn to his assistance all the helps he could meet with among the ancient poets. The sword of Michael, which makes so great a havoc among the bad angels, was given him, we are told, out of the armoury of God:

> —But the sword
> Of Michael from the armoury of God
> Was giv'n him, temper'd so that neither keen
> Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
> The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite
> Descending, and in half cut sheer———

This passage is a copy of that in Virgil, wherein the poet tells us, that the sword of Æneas, which was given him by a deity, broke into pieces the sword of Turnus, which came from a mortal forge. As the moral in this place is divine, so by the way we may observe, that the bestowing on a man who is favoured by heaven such an allegorical weapon is very conformable to the old eastern way of thinking. Not only Homer has made use of it, but we find the Jewish hero in the Book of Maccabees, who had fought the battles of the chosen people with so much glory and success, receiving in his dream a sword from the hand of the prophet Jeremiah. The following passage, where Satan is described as wounded by the sword of Michael, is in imitation of Homer.

> The griding sword with discontinuous wound
> Pass'd through him; but th' ethereal substance clos'd,
> Not long divisible; and from the gash
> A stream of nectarous humour issuing flow'd
> Sanguine (such as celestial spirits may bleed),
> And all his armour stain'd———

Homer tells in the same manner, that upon Diomedes wounding the gods, there flowed from the wound an ichor, or pure kind of blood, which was not bred from mortal viands: and that, though the pain was exquisitely great, the wound soon closed up and healed in those beings who are vested with immortality.

I question not but Milton in his description of his furious Moloch flying from the battle, and bellowing with the wound he had received, had his eye on Mars in the Iliad: who upon his being wounded, is represented as retiring out of the fight, and making an outcry louder than that of a whole army when it begins the charge. Homer adds, that the Greeks and Trojans, who were engaged in a general battle, were terrified on each side with the bellowing of this wounded deity. The reader will easily observe how Milton has kept all the horror of this image, without running into the ridicule of it:

> —Where the might of Gabriel fought,
> And with fierce ensigns pierc'd the deep array
> Of Moloch, furious king! who him defy'd,
> And at his chariot-wheels to drag him bound
> Threatened, nor from the Holy One of heav'n
> Refrain'd, his tongue blasphemous; but anon
> Down cloven to the waist, with shatter'd arms
> And uncouth pain fled bellowing.———

Milton has likewise raised his description in this book with many images taken out of the poetical parts of Scripture. The Messiah's chariot, as I have before taken notice, is formed upon a vision of Ezekiel, who, as Grotius observes, has very much in him of Homer's spirit in the poetical parts of his prophecy.

The following lines in that glorious commission which is given the Messiah to extirpate the host of rebel angels, is drawn from a sublime passage in the Psalms:

> Go then, thou mightiest, in thy Father's might.
> Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
> That shake heav'n's basis, bring forth all my war,
> My bow, my thunder, my almighty arms
> Gird on, and sword on thy puissant thigh.

The reader will easily discover many other strokes of the same nature.

There is no question but Milton had heated his imagination with the fight of the gods in Homer, before he entered upon this engagement of the angels. Homer there gives us a scene of men, heroes, and gods, mixed together in battle. Mars animates the contending armies, and lifts up his voice in such a manner, that it is heard distinctly amidst all the shouts and confusion of the fight. Jupiter at the same time thunders over their heads, while Neptune raises such a tempest, that the whole field of battle, and all the tops of the mountains, shake about them. The poet tells us, that Pluto himself, whose habitation was in the very centre of the earth, was so affrighted at the shock, that he leapt from his throne. Homer afterwards describes Vulcan as pouring down a storm of fire upon the river Xanthus, and Minerva as throwing a rock at Mars; who, he tells us, covered seven acres in his fall.

As Homer has introduced into his battle of the gods every thing that is great and terrible in nature, Milton has filled his fight of good and

bad angels with all the like circumstances of horror. The shout of armies, the rattling of brazen chariots, the hurling of rocks and mountains, the earthquake, the fire, the thunder, are all of them employed to lift up the reader's imagination, and give him a suitable idea of so great an action. With what art has the poet represented the whole body of the earth trembling, even before it was created!

> All heav'n resounded; and had earth been then,
> All earth had to its centre shook.———

In how sublime and just a manner does he afterward describe the whole heaven shaking under the wheels of the Messiah's chariot, with that exception to the throne of God!

> Under his burning wheels
> The stedfast empyrean shook throughout,
> All but the throne itself of God.———

Notwithstanding the Messiah appears clothed with so much terror and majesty, the poet has still found means to make his readers conceive an idea of him beyond what he himself is able to describe:

> Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
> His thunder in mid volley; for he meant
> Not to destroy, but root them out of heaven.

In a word, Milton's genius, which was so great in itself, and so strengthened by all the helps of learning, appears in this book every way equal to the subject, which was the most sublime that could enter into the thoughts of a poet. As he knew all the arts of affecting the mind, he has

given it certain resting-places, and opportunities of recovering itself from time to time; several speeches, reflections, similitudes, and the like reliefs being interspersed to diversify his narration, and ease the attention of the reader.—L.

PAPER XIII.

———*Ut his exordia primis*
Omina, et ipse tener mundi concreverat orbis
Tum durare solum et discludere Nerea ponto
Coperat, et rerum paulatim sumere formas

VIRG. ECL. VI. 33

He sung the secret seeds of nature's frame,
How seas, and earth, and air, and active flame,
Fell through the mighty void, and in their fall,
Were blindly gather'd in this goodly ball.
The tender soil then stiff'ning by degrees,
Shut from the bounded earth the bounding seas
The earth and ocean various forms disclose
And a new sun to the new world arose.—DRYDEN.

LONGINUS has observed, that there may be a loftiness in sentiments where there is no passion, and brings instances out of ancient authors to support this his opinion. The pathetic, as that great critic observes, may animate and inflame the sublime, but is not essential to it. Accordingly, as he further remarks, we very often find that those who excel most in stirring up the passions very often want the talent of writing in the great and sublime manner, and so on the contrary. Milton has shown himself a master in both these ways of writing. The seventh book which we are now entering upon, is an

instance of that sublime which is not mixed and worked up with passion. The author appears in a kind of composed and sedate majesty; and though the sentiments do not give so great an emotion as those in the former book, they abound with as magnificent ideas. The sixth book, like a troubled ocean, represents greatness in confusion; the seventh affects the imagination like the ocean in a calm, and fills the mind of the reader, without producing in it any thing like tumult, or agitation.

The critic above mentioned among the rules which he lays down for succeeding in the sublime way of writing, proposes to his reader, that he should imitate the most celebrated authors who have gone before him, and have been engaged in works of the same nature; as in particular that, if he writes on a poetical subject, he should consider how Homer would have spoken on such an occasion. By this means one great genius often catches the flame from another, and writes in his spirit, without copying servilely after him. There are a thousand shining passages in Virgil, which have been lighted up by Homer.

Milton, though his own natural strength of genius was capable of furnishing out a perfect work, has doubtless very much raised and ennobled his conceptions by such an imitation as that which Longinus has recommended.

In this book, which gives us an account of the six days' works, the poet received but very few assistances from heathen writers, who are strangers to the wonders of creation. But as there are many glorious strokes of poetry upon this subject

in Holy Writ, the author has numberless allusions to them through the whole course of this book. The great critic I have before mentioned, though a heathen, has taken notice of the sublime manner in which the lawgiver of the Jews has described the creation in the first chapter of Genesis; and there are many other passages in Scripture which rise up to the same majesty, where the subject is touched upon. Milton has shown his judgment very remarkably, in making use of such of these as were proper for his poem, and in duly qualifying those strains of eastern poetry which were suited to readers whose imaginations were set to a higher pitch than those of colder climates.

Adam's speech to the angel, wherein he desires an account of what had passed within the regions of nature before the creation, is very great and solemn. The following lines, in which he tells him, that the day is not too far spent for him to enter upon such a subject, are exquisite in their kind:

> And the great light of day yet wants to run
> Much of his race, though steep; suspense in heav'n
> Held by thy voice, thy potent voice he hears,
> And longer will delay to hear thee tell
> His generation, &c.

The angel's encouraging our first parents in a modest pursuit after knowledge, with the causes which he assigns for the creation of the world, are very just and beautiful. The Messiah, by whom, as we are told in Scripture, the heavens were made, goes forth in the power of his Father, surrounded with a host of angels, and clothed

with such a majesty as becomes his entering upon a work which, according to our conceptions, appears the utmost exertion of Omnipotence. What a beautiful description has our author raised upon that hint in one of the prophets! "And behold there came four chariots out from between two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of brass:"

> About his chariot numberless were pour'd
> Cherub and seraph, potentates and thrones,
> And virtues, winged spirits, and chariots wing'd
> From the armoury of God, where stand of old
> Myriads between two brazen mountains lodg'd
> Against a solemn day harness'd at hand,
> Celestial equipage! and now came forth
> Spontaneous, for within them spirit liv'd,
> Attendant on the Lord: Heav'n open'd wide
> Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound!
> On golden hinges moving———

I have before taken notice of these chariots of God, and of these gates of heaven; and shall here only add, that Homer gives us the same idea of the latter, as opening of themselves; though he afterwards takes off from it, by telling us that the hours first of all removed those prodigious heaps of clouds which lay as a barrier before them.

I do not know any thing in the whole poem more sublime than the description which follows, where the Messiah is represented at the head of his angels, as looking down into the chaos, calming its confusion, riding into the midst of it, and drawing the first outline of the creation:

> On heav'nly ground they stood, and from the shore
> They view'd the vast immeasurable abyss
> Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
> Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds

And surging waves, as mountains to assault
Heav'n's height, and with the centre mix the pole.
"Silence, ye troubled waves: and thou, deep, peace!"
Said then th' omnific Word, "Your discord end!"
Nor staid, but on the wings of cherubim
Up-lifted, in paternal glory rode
Far into Chaos, and the world unborn;
For Chaos heard his voice. Him all his train
Follow'd in bright procession, to behold
Creation, and the wonders of his might.
Then stay'd the fervid wheels; and in his hand
He took the golden compasses, prepar'd,
In God's eternal store to circumscribe
This universe and all created things:
One foot he centred, and the other turn'd
Round through the vast profundity obscure,
And said, "Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
This be thy just circumference, O world!"

The thought of the golden compasses is conceived altogether in Homer's spirit, and is a very noble incident in this wonderful description. Homer, when he speaks of the gods, ascribes to them several arms and instruments with the same greatness of imagination. Let the reader only peruse the description of Minerva's ægis, or buckler, in the fifth book of the Iliad, with her spear, which would overturn whole squadrons, and her helmet that was sufficient to cover an army drawn out of a hundred cities. The golden compasses, in the above-mentioned passage, appear a very natural instrument in the hand of him whom Plato somewhere calls the Divine Geometrician. As poetry delights in clothing abstracted ideas in allegories and sensible images, we find a magnificent description of the creation formed after the same manner in one of the prophets, wherein he describes the Almighty Architect as measuring the waters in

the hollow of his hand, meting out the heavens with his span, comprehending the dust of the earth in a measure, weighing the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance.' Another of them describing the Supreme Being in this great work of creation, represents him as laying the foundations of the earth, and stretching a line upon it; and, in another place, as garnishing the heavens, stretching out the north over the empty place, and hanging the earth upon nothing. This last noble thought Milton has expressed in the following verse:

> And earth, self-balanc'd on her centre hung.

The beauties of description in this book lie so very thick, that it is impossible to enumerate them in this paper. The poet has employed on them the whole energy of our tongue. The several great scenes of the creation rise up to view one after another, in such a manner, that the reader seems present at this wonderful work, and to assist among the choirs of angels who are the spectators of it. How glorious is the conclusion of the first day!

> —Thus was the first day ev'n and morn:
> Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung,
> By the celestial choirs, when orient light
> Exhaling first from darkness they beheld;
> Birth-day of heav'n and earth! with joy and shout
> The hollow universal orb they fill'd.

We have the same elevation of thought in the third day, when the mountains were brought forth and the deep was made:

Immediately the mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad bare backs up-heave
Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky:
So high as heav'n the tumid hills; so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
Capacious bed of waters———

We have also the rising of the whole vegetable world described in this day's work, which is filled with all the graces that other poets have lavished in their description of the spring, and leads the reader's imagination into a theatre equally surprising and beautiful.

The several glories of the heavens make their appearance on the fourth day:

First in his east the glorious lamp was seen,
Regent of day, and all the horizon round
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
His longitude through heaven's high road; the gray
Dawn, and the Pleiades before him danc'd,
Shedding sweet influence. Less bright the moon,
But opposite in levell'd west was set
His mirror, with full face borrowing her light.
From him, for other lights she needed none
In that aspect, and still that distance keeps
Till night; then in the east her turn she shines,
Revolv'd on heaven's great axle, and her reign
With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
With thousand thousand stars, that then appear'd
Spangling the hemisphere———

One would wonder how the pōet could be so concise in his description of the six days' works, as to comprehend them within the bounds of an episode, and at the same time so particular, as to give us a lively idea of them. This is still more remarkable in his account of the fifth and sixth days, in which he has drawn out to our view the whole animal creation, from the reptile, to the behemoth. As the lion and the leviathan

are two of the noblest productions in the world of living creatures, the reader will find a most exquisite spirit of poetry in the account which our author gives us of them. The sixth day concludes with the formation of man, upon which the angel takes occasion, as he did after the battle in heaven, to remind Adam of his obedience, which was the principal design of this his visit.

The poet afterwards represents the Messiah returning into heaven, and taking a survey of his great work. There is something inexpressibly sublime in this part of the poem, where the author describes that great period of time, filled with so many glorious circumstances; when the heavens and earth were finished; when the Messiah ascended up in triumph through the everlasting gates; when he looked down with pleasure upon his new creation; when every part of nature seemed to rejoice in its existence, when the morning-stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

So ev'n and morn accomplish'd the sixth day:
Yet not till the Creator from his work
Desisting, though unwearied, up return'd,
Up to the heaven of heavens, his high abode;
Thence to behold his new created world
Th' addition of his empire, how it show'd
In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
Answering his great idea. Up he rode,
Follow'd with acclamation and the sound
Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tun'd
Angelic harmonies; the earth, the air
Resounded (thou rememberest, for thou heard'st)
The heavens and all the constellations rung,
The planets in their station list'ning stood,
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant,
"Open, ye everlasting gates!" they sung,
"Open, ye heavens, your living doors! let in
The great Creator from his work return'd
Magnificent, his six days' work—a world."

* I cannot conclude this book upon the creation, without mentioning a poem which has lately appeared under that title. The work was undertaken with so good an intention, and is executed with so great a mastery, that it deserves to be looked upon as one of the most useful and noble productions in our English verse. The reader cannot but be pleased to find the depths of philosophy enlivened with all the charms of poetry, and to see so great a strength of reason amidst so beautiful a redundancy of the imagination. The author has shown us that design in all the works of nature which necessarily leads us to the knowledge of the first cause. In short, he has illustrated, by numberless and incontestible instances, that divine wisdom which the son of Sirach has so nobly ascribed to the Supreme Being in his formation of the world, when he tells us, that "He created her, he saw her, and numbered her, and poured her out upon all his works."—L.

PAPER XIV.

Sanctius his animal, mentisque capacius altæ
Deerat adhuc, et quod dominari in cætera posset,
Natus homo est———. OVID, METAM. I. 76.

A creature of a more exalted kind
Was wanting yet, and then was man design'd;
Conscious of thought, of more capacious breast,
For empire form'd and fit to rule the rest.

DRYDEN.

THE accounts which Raphael gives of the battle of angels, and the creation of the world have

in them those qualifications which the critics judge requisite to an episode. They are nearly related to the principal action, and have a just connexion with the fable.

The eighth book opens with a beautiful description of the impression which this discourse of the arch-angel made on our first parents. Adam afterwards, by a very natural curiosity, inquires concerning the motions of those celestial bodies which make the most glorious appearance among the six days' works. The poet here, with a great deal of art, represents Eve, as withdrawing from this part of their conversation, to amusements more suitable to her sex. He well knew that the episode in this book, which is filled with Adam's account of his passion and esteem for Eve, would have been improper for her hearing, and has therefore devised very just and beautiful reasons for her retiring

So spake our sire, and by his countenance seem'd
Ent'ring on studious thoughts abstruse; which Eve
Perceiving, where she sat retir'd in sight,
With lowliness majestic from her seat,
And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
Rose; and went forth among her fruits and flowers,
To visit how they prosper'd, bud and bloom,
Her nursery: they at her coming sprung,
And, touch'd by her fair tenance, gladlier grew,
Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
Delighted, or not capable her ear
Of what was high: such pleasure she reserv'd,
Adam relating, she sole auditress:
Her husband the relater she preferr'd
Before the angel, and of him to ask
Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
With conjugal caresses: from his lip
Not words alone pleas'd her. O when meet now
Such pairs, in love and mutual honour join'd!

The angel's returning a doubtful answer to Adam's inquiries was not only proper for the moral reason which the poet assigns, but because it would have been highly absurd to have given the sanction of an archangel to any particular system of philosophy. The chief points in the Ptolemaic and Copernican hypotheses are described with great conciseness and perspicuity, and at the same time dressed in very pleasing and poetical images.

Adam, to detain the angel, enters afterward upon his own history, and relates to him the circumstances in which he found himself upon his creation; as also his conversation with his Maker, and his first meeting with Eve. There is no part of the poem more apt to raise the attention of the reader than this discourse of our great ancestor; as nothing can be more surprising and delightful to us, than to hear the sentiments that arose in the first man while he was yet new and fresh from the hands of his Creator. The poet has interwoven every thing which is delivered upon this subject in holy writ with so many beautiful imaginations of his own, that nothing can be conceived more just and natural than this whole episode. As our author knew this subject could not but be agreeable to his reader, he would not throw it into the relation of his six days' works, but reserved it for a distinct episode, that he might have an opportunity of expatiating upon it more at large. Before I enter on this part of the poem, I cannot but take notice of two shining passages in the dialogue between Adam and the angel. The first is that wherein

our ancestor gives an account of the pleasure he took in conversing with him, which contains a very noble moral:

> For while I sit with thee I seem in heav'n,
> And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
> Than fruits of palm-trees (pleasantest to thirst
> And hunger both, from labour) at the hour
> Of sweet repast: they satiate, and soon fill,
> Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine
> Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.

The other I shall mention is that in which the angel gives a reason why he should be glad to hear the story Adam was about to relate.

> For I that day was absent, as befel,
> Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure,
> Far on excursion towards the gates of hell.
> Squar'd in full legion (such command we had)
> To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
> Or enemy, while God was in his work,
> Lest he incens'd at such eruption bold,
> Destruction with creation might have mix'd.

There is no question but our poet drew the image in what follows from that in Virgil's sixth book, where Æneas and the Sibyl stand before the adamantine gates, which are there described as shut upon the place of torments, and listen to the groans, the clank of chains, and the noise of iron whips, that were heard in those regions of pain and sorrow.

> ——Fast, we found, fast shut,
> The dismal gates, and barricado'd strong:
> But long ere our approaching, heard within
> Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
> Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.

Adam then proceeds to give an account of his condition and sentiments immediately after his

creation. How agreeably does he represent the posture in which he found himself, the beautiful landscape that surrounded him, and the gladness of heart which grew up in him, on that occasion!

——As new wak'd from soundest sleep,
Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid
In balmy sweat, which with his beams the sun
Soon dry'd, and on the reeking moisture fed.
Straight toward heaven my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,
And gaz'd awhile the ample sky; till rais'd
By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,
As thitherward endeavouring and upright
Stood on my feet. About me round I saw
Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
And liquid lapse of murmuring streams; by these,
Creatures that liv'd and mov'd, and walk'd, or flew,
Birds on the branches warbling: all things smil'd
With fragrance, and with joy my heart o'erflow'd.

Adam is afterward described as surprised at his own existence, and taking a survey of himself and of all the works of nature. He likewise is represented as discovering, by the light of reason, that he, and every thing about him, must have been the effect of some Being infinitely good and powerful, and that this Being had a right to his worship and adoration. His first address to the Sun, and to those parts of the creation which made the most distinguished figure, is very natural and amusing to the imagination:

"Thou Sun," said I, "fair light,
And thou enlighten'd earth, so fresh and gay,
Ye hills, and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains,
And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?——

His next sentiment, when upon his first going to sleep he fancies himself losing his existence,

and falling away into nothing, can never be sufficiently admired. His dream, in which he still preserves the consciousness of his existence, together with his removal into the garden which was prepared for his reception, are also circumstances finely imagined, and grounded upon what is delivered in sacred story.

These, and the like wonderful incidents in this part of the work, have in them all the beauties of novelty, at the same time that they have all the graces of nature.

They are such as none but a great genius could have thought of; though, upon the perusal of them, they seem to rise of themselves from the subject of which he treats. In a word, though they are natural, they are not obvious; which is the true character of all fine writing.

The impression which the interdiction of the tree of life left in the mind of our first parent is described with great strength and judgment: as the image of the several beasts and birds passing in review before him is very beautiful and lively.

> ———Each bird and beast behold
> Approaching two and two, these cow'ring low
> With blandishment; each bird stoop'd on his wing
> I nam'd them as they pass'd.———

Adam, in the next place, describes a conference which he held with his Maker upon the subject of solitude. The poet here represents the Supreme Being as making an essay of his own work, and putting to the trial that reasoning faculty with which he had endued his creature. Adam urges, in the divine colloquy, the

impossibility of his being happy, though he was the inhabitant of Paradise, and lord of the whole creation, without the conversation and society of some rational creature who should partake those blessings with him. This dialogue, which is supported chiefly by the beauty of the thoughts, without other poetical ornaments, is as fine a part as any in the whole poem. The more the reader examines the justness and delicacy of its sentiments, the more he will find himself pleased with it. The poet has wonderfully preserved the character of majesty and condescension in the Creator, and, in the same time, that of humility and adoration in the creature, as particularly in the following lines:

> Thus I presumptuous; and the vision bright,
> As with a smile more brighten'd, thus reply'd, &c.
> ——I with leave of speech implor'd,
> And humble deprecation, thus reply'd;
> "Let not my words offend thee, Heavenly Power,
> My Maker, be propitious while I speak," &c.

Adam then proceeds to give an account of his second sleep, and of the dream in which he beheld the formation of Eve. The new passion that was awakened in him at the sight of her is touched very finely:

> Under his forming hands a creature grew,
> Manlike, but diff'rent sex: so lovely fair,
> That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
> Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd
> And in her looks, which from that time infus'd
> Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before;
> And into all things from her air inspir'd
> The spirit of love and amorous delight.

Adam's distress upon losing sight of this beautiful phantom, with his exclamations of joy,

and gratitude at the discovery of a real creature who resembled the apparition which had been presented to him in his dream; the approaches he makes to her, and his manner of courtship, are all laid together in a most exquisite propriety of sentiments.

Though this part of the poem is worked up with great warmth and spirit, the love which is described in it is every way suitable to a state of innocence. If the reader compares the description which Adam here gives of his leading Eve to the nuptial bower, with that which Mr. Dryden has made on the same occasion in a scene of his Fall of Man, he will be sensible of the great care which Milton took to avoid all thoughts on so delicate a subject that might be offensive to religion or good manners. The sentiments are chaste, but not cold; and convey to the mind ideas of the most transporting passion, and of the greatest purity. What a noble mixture of rapture and innocence has the author joined together, in the reflection which Adam makes on the pleasures of love, compared to those of sense!

Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
My story to the sum of earthly bliss
Which I enjoy; and must confess to find
In all things else delight indeed, but such
As us'd or not, works in the mind no change,
Nor vehement desire; these delicacies
I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flowers,
Walks, and the melody of birds; but here
Far otherwise, transported I behold,
Transported touch; here passion first I felt,
Commotion strange! in all enjoyments else
Superior and unmov'd, here only weak
Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance.
Or nature fail'd in me, and left some part
Not proof enough such object to sustain;

Or from my side subducting, took perhaps
More than enough; at least on her bestow'd
Too much of ornament, in outward show
Elaborate, of inward less exact.
——————————When I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best;
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded; wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discountenanc'd, and like folly shows:
Authority and reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally; and, to consummate all,
Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic plac'd.

These sentiments of love in our first parent gave the angel such an insight into human nature, that he seems apprehensive of the evils which might befal the species in general, as well as Adam in particular, from the excess of this passion. He therefore fortifies him against it by timely admonitions; which very artfully prepare the mind of the reader for the occurrences of the next book, where the weakness, of which Adam here gives such distant discoveries, brings about that fatal event which is the subject of the poem. His discourse, which follows the gentle rebuke he received from the angel, shows that his love, however violent it might appear, was still founded in reason, and consequently not improper for Paradise:

Neither her outside form'd so fair, nor aught
In procreation common to all kinds
(Though higher of the genial bed by far,
And with mysterious reverence I deem),
So much delights me, as those graceful acts
Those thousand decencies that daily flow

From all her words and actions, mixt with love
And sweet compliance, which declare unfeigned
Union of mind, or in us both one soul:
Harmony to behold in wedded pair.

Adam's speech, at parting with the angel, has in it a deference and gratitude agreeable to an inferior nature, and at the same time a certain dignity and greatness suitable to the father of mankind in his state of innocence.—L.

PAPER XV.

In te omnis domus inclinata recumbit.

VIRG. ÆN. XII. 59.

On thee the fortunes of our house depend.

If we look into the three great heroic poems which have appeared in the world, we may observe that they are built upon very slight foundations. Homer lived near 300 years after the Trojan war; and, as the writing of history was not then in use among the Greeks, we may very well suppose that the tradition of Achilles and Ulysses had brought down but very few particulars to his knowledge; though there is no quesion but he has wrought into his two poems such of their remarkable adventures as were still talked of among his contemporaries.

The story of Æneas, on which Virgil founded his poem, was likewise very bare of circumstances, and by that means afforded him an opportunity of embellishing it with fiction, and giving a full range to his own invention. We find, however, that he has interwoven, in the course

of his fable, the principal particulars, which were generally believed among the Romans, of Æneas' voyage and settlement in Italy.

The reader may find an abridgement of the whole story, as collected out of the ancient historians, and as it was received among the Romans, in Dionysius Halicarnassus.

Since none of the critics have considered Virgil's fable with relation to this history of Æneas, it may not perhaps, be amiss to examine it in this light, so far as regards my present purpose. Whoever looks into the abridgement above mentioned, will find that the character of Æneas is filled with piety to the gods, and a superstitious observation of prodigies, oracles, and predictions. Virgil has not only preserved his character in the person of Æneas, but has given a place in his poem to those particular prophecies which he found recorded of him in history and tradition. The poet took the matters of fact as they came down to him, and circumstanced them after his own manner, to make them appear the more natural, agreeable, or surprising. I believe very many readers have been shocked at that ludicrous prophecy which one of the harpies pronounces to the Trojans in the third book; namely, that before they had built their intended city they should be reduced by hunger to eat their very tables. But, when they hear that this was one of the circumstances that had been transmitted to the Romans in the history of Æneas, they will think the poet did very well in taking notice of it. The historian above mentioned acquaints us, that a prophetess had foretold Æneas, he should

take his voyage westward, till his companions should eat their tables; and that accordingly, upon his landing in Italy, as they were eating their flesh upon cakes of bread for want of other conveniences, they afterwards fed on the cakes themselves; upon which one of the company said merrily, "We are eating our tables." They immediately took the hint, says the historian, and concluded the prophecy to be fulfilled. As Virgil did not think it proper to omit so material a particular in the history of Æneas, it may be worth while to consider with how much judgment he has qualified it, and taken off every thing that might have appeared improper for a passage in a heroic poem. The prophetess who foretels it is a hungry harpy, as the person who discovers it is young Ascanius.

Heus etiam mensas consumimus! inquit Iulus—Æn. VII. 116.
See, we devour the plates on which we feed.—DRYDEN.

Such an observation, which is beautiful in the mouth of a boy, would have been ridiculous from any other of the company. I am apt to think that the changing of the Trojan fleet into water-nymphs, which is the most violent machine in the whole Æneid, and has given offence to several critics, may be accounted for the same way. Virgil himself, before he begins that relation, premises, that what he was going to tell appeared incredible, but that it was justified by tradition. What further confirms me that this change of the fleet was a celebrated circumstance in the history of Æneas, is, that Ovid has given a place to the same metamorphosis in his account of the heathen mythology.

None of the critics I have met with have considered the fable of the Æneid in this light, and taken notice how the tradition on which it was founded authorizes those parts in it which appear the most exceptionable. I hope the length of this reflection will not make it unacceptable to the curious part of my readers.

The history which was the basis of Milton's poem is still shorter than either that of the Iliad or Æneid. The poet has likewise taken care to insert every circumstance of it in the body of his fable. The ninth book, which we are here to consider, is raised upon that brief account in Scripture, wherein we are told that the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field; that he tempted the woman to eat of the forbidden fruit; that she was overcome by this temptation, and that Adam followed her example. From these few particulars, Milton has formed one of the most entertaining fables that invention ever produced. He has disposed of these several circumstances among so many beautiful and natural fictions of his own, that his whole story looks like a comment upon sacred writ, or rather seems to be a full and complete relation of what the other is only in epitome. I have insisted the longer on this consideration, as I look upon the disposition and contrivance of the fable to be the principal beauty of the ninth book, which has more story in it, and is fuller of incidents, than any other in the whole poem. Satan's traversing the globe, and still keeper within the shadow of the night, as fearing to be discovered by the angel of the sun, who had before detected him,

is one of those beautiful imaginations with which he introduces this his second series of adventures Having examined the nature of every creature and found out one which was the most proper for his purpose, he again returns to Paradise; and, to avoid discovery, sinks by night with a river that ran under the garden, and rises up again through a fountain that issued from it by the tree of life. The poet, who as we have before taken notice, speaks as little as possible in his own person, and, after the example of Homer, fills every part of his work with manners and characters, introduces a soliloquy of this infernal agent who was thus restless in the destruction of man. He is then described as gliding through the garden, under the resemblance of a mist, in order to find out that creature in which he designed to tempt our first parents. This description has something in it very poetical and surprising:

> So saying, through each thicket dank or dry
> Like a black mist low creeping, he held on
> His midnight search, where soonest he might find
> The serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found
> In labyrinth of many a round self-roll'd
> His head the midst, well stor'd with subtle wiles.

The author afterwards gives us a description of the morning, which is wonderfully suitable to a divine poem, and peculiar to that first season of nature. He represents the earth, before it was curst, as a great altar breathing out its incense from all parts, and sending up a pleasant savour to the nostrils of its Creator; to which he adds a noble idea of Adam and Eve, as offering their morning worship, and filling up the universal concert of praise and adoration:

Now when a sacred light began to dawn
In Eden on the humid flowers, that breath'd
Their morning incense; when all things that breathe
From the earth's great altar send up silent praise
To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
With grateful smell; forth came the human pair,
And join'd their vocal worship to their choir
Of creatures wanting voice———

The dispute which follows between our two first parents is represented with great art. It proceeds from a difference of judgment, not of passion, and is managed with reason, not with heat. It is such a dispute as we may suppose might have happened in Paradise, had men continued happy and innocent. There is a great delicacy in the moralities which are interspersed in Adam's discourse, and which the most ordinary reader cannot but take notice of. That force of love which the father of mankind so finely describes in the eighth book, and which is inserted in my last paper, shows itself here in many fine instances; as in those fond regards he casts towards Eve at her parting from him:

Her long with ardent look his eye pursu'd
Delighted, but desiring more her stay,
Oft he to her his charge of quick return
Repeated; she to him as oft engaged
To be return'd by noon amid the bow'r.

In his impatience and amusement during her absence:

———Adam the while,
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest flow'rs a garland to adorn
Her tresses, and her rural labours crown,
As reapers oft are wont their rural queen.
Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long delay'd.

But particularly in that passionate speech, where, seeing her irrecoverably lost, he resolves to perish with her, rather than to live without her:

——————Some cursed fraud
Of enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown,
And me with thee hath ruin'd; for with thee
Certain my resolution is to die:
How can I live without thee! How forego
Thy sweet converse and love so dearly join'd,
To live again in these wild woods forlorn?
Should God create another Eve, and I
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from my heart: no, no! I feel
The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe!

The beginning of this speech, and the preparation to it, are animated with the same spirit as the conclusion, which I have here quoted.

The several wiles which are put in practice by the tempter, when he found Eve separated from her husband, the many pleasing images of nature which are intermixed in this part of the story, with its graduai and regular progress to the fatal catastrophe, are so very remarkable, that it would be superfluous to point out their respective beauties.

I have avoided mentioning any particular similitudes in my remarks on this great work, because I have given a general account of them in my paper on the first book. There is one, however, in this part of the poem, which I shall here quote, as it is not only very beautiful, but the closest of any in the whole poem; I mean that where the serpent is described as rolling forward in all his pride, animated by the evil

spirit, and conducting Eve to her destruction, while Adam was at too great a distance from her to give her his assistance. These several particulars are all of them wrought into the following similitude:

> ——————Hope elevates, and joy
> Brightens his crest; as when a wandering fire,
> Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night
> Condenses, and the cold environs round,
> Kindled through agitation to a flame,
> (Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends)
> Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
> Misleads th' amazed night wanderer from his way
> To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool,
> There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far.

The secret intoxication of pleasure, with all those transient flushings of guilt and joy, which the poet represents in our first parents upon eating the forbidden fruit, to those flaggings of spirit, damps of sorrow, and mutual accusations which succeed it, are conceived with a wonderful imagination, and described in very natural sentiments.

When Dido, in the fourth Æneid, yielded to that fatal temptation which ruined her, Virgil tells us the earth trembled, the heavens were filled with flashes of lightning, and the nymphs howled upon the mountain tops. Milton, in the same poetical spirit has described all nature as disturbed upon Eve's eating the forbidden fruit:

> So saying, her rash hand in evil hour,
> Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she ate;
> Earth felt the wound, and Nature, from her seat
> Sighing, through all her works, gave signs of woe
> That all was lost.——————

Upon Adam's falling into the same guilt, the

whole creation appears a second time in convulsions:

> ———He scrupled not to eat
> Against his better knowledge; not deceiv'd,
> But fondly overcome with female charm.
> Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
> In pangs, and nature gave a second groan;
> Sky low'r'd, and muttering thunder, some sad drops
> Wept at completing of the mortal sin.

As all nature suffered by the guilt of our first parents, these symptoms of trouble and consternation are wonderfully imagined, not only as prodigies, but as marks of her sympathizing in the fall of man.

Adam's converse with Eve, after having eaten of the forbidden fruit, is an exact copy of that between Jupiter and Juno in the fourteenth Iliad. Juno there approaches Jupiter with the girdle which she had received from Venus; upon which he tells her, that she appeared more charming and desirable than she had ever done before, even when their loves were at the highest. The poet afterward describes them as reposing on a summit of Mount Ida, which produced under them a bed of flowers, the lotus, the crocus, and the hyacinth: and concludes his description with their falling asleep.

Let the reader compare this with the following passage in Milton, which begins with Adam's speech to Eve:

> For never did thy beauty since the day
> I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd
> With all perfections, so inflame my sense
> With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
> Than ever, bounty of this virtuous tree.
> So said he, and forbore not glance or toy

Of amorous intent, well understood
Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire
Her hand he seized, and to a shady bank,
Thick overhead with verdant roof embower'd,
He led her, nothing loth; flowers were the couch,
Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,
And hyacinth, Earth's freshest softest lap.
There they their fill of love and love's disport
Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
The solace of their sin, till dewy sleep
Oppress'd them.————

As no poet seems ever to have studied Homer more, or to have more resembled him in the greatness of genius, than Milton, I think I should have given but a very imperfect account of his beauties, if I had not observed the most remarkable passages which look like parallels in these two great authors. I might, in the course of these criticisms, have taken notice of many particular lines and expressions which are translated from the Greek poet; but as I thought this would have appeared too minute and over-curious, I have purposely omitted them. The greater incidents, however, are not only set off by being shown in the same light with several of the same nature in Homer, but by that means may be also guarded against the cavils of the tasteless or ignorant.—L.

PAPER XVI.

————*Quis talia fando*
Temperet a lachrymis?—— VIRG. ÆN. II. 6.

Who can relate such woes without a tear?

THE tenth book of Paradise Lost has a greater variety of persons in it than any other in the

whole poem. The author, upon the winding up of his action, introduces all those who had any concern in it, and shows with great beauty the influence which it had upon each of them. It is like the last act of a well-written tragedy, in which all who had part in it are generally drawn up before the audience, and represented under those circumstances in which the determination of the action places them.

I shall therefore consider this book under four heads, in relation to the celestial, the infernal, the human, and the imaginary persons, who have their respective parts allotted in it.

To begin with the celestial persons. The guardian angels of Paradise are described as returning to heaven upon the fall of man, in order to approve their vigilance; their arrival, their manner of reception, with a sorrow which appeared in themselves, and in those spirits who are said to rejoice at the conversion of a sinner, are very finely laid together in the following lines:

> Up into heav'n from Paradise in haste
> Th' angelic guards ascended, mute and sad
> For man; for of his state by this they knew:
> Much wond'ring how the subtle fiend had stol'n
> Entrance unseen. Soon as th' unwelcome news
> From earth arriv'd at heav'n gate, displeas'd
> All were who heard, dim sadness did not spare
> That time celestial visages; yet, mixt
> With pity, violated not their bliss.
> About the new-arriv'd in multitudes
> Th' ethereal people ran to hear and know,
> How all befel. They tow'rds the throne supreme
> Accountable made haste, to make appear,
> With righteous plea, their utmost vigilance,
> And easily approv'd; when the Most High
> Eternal Father, from his secret cloud
> Amidst, in thunder utter'd thus his voice.

The same Divine Person, who in the foregoing parts of this poem interceded for our first parents before their fall, overthrew the rebel angels, and created the world, is now represented as descending to Paradise, and pronouncing sentence upon the three offenders. The cool of the evening being a circumstance with which Holy Writ introduces this great scene, it is poetically described by our author, who has also kept religiously to the form of words in which the three several sentences were passed upon Adam, Eve, and the serpent. He has rather chosen to neglect the numerousness of his verse, than to deviate from those speeches which are recorded on this great occasion. The guilt and confusion of our first parents, standing naked before their judge, is touched with great beauty. Upon the arrival of Sin and Death into the works of the Creation, the Almighty is again introduced as speaking to his angels that surrounded him.

> See! with what heat these dogs of hell advance,
> To waste and havoc yonder world, which I
> So fair and good created, &c.

The following passage is formed upon that glorious image in Holy Writ, which compares the voice of an innumerable host of angels uttering hallelujahs, to the voice of mighty thunderings, or of many waters,

> He ended, and the heav'nly audience loud
> Sung hallelujah, as the sound of seas,
> Through multitude that sung: "Just are thy ways,
> Righteous are the decrees in all thy works!
> Who can extenuate thee?—"

Though the author, in the whole course of his poem, and particularly in the book we are now examining, has infinite allusions to places of Scripture, I have only taken notice in my remarks of such as are of a poetical nature, and which are woven with great beauty into the body of his fable. Of this kind is that passage in the present book, where, describing Sin and Death as marching through the works of nature, he adds,

> —Behind her Death
> Close following pace for pace, mounted yet
> On his pale horse———

Which alludes to that passage in Scripture so wonderfully poetical, and terrifying to the imagination: "And I looked, and behold a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him: and power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with sickness, and with the beasts of the earth." Under this first head of celestial persons we must likewise take notice of the command which the angels received, to produce the several changes in nature, and sully the beauty of the creation. Accordingly they are represented as infecting the stars and planets with malignant influences, weakening the light of the sun, bringing down the winter into the milder regions of nature, planting winds and storms in several quarters of the sky, storing the clouds with thunder, and, in short, perverting the whole frame of the universe to the condition of its criminal inhabitants. As this is a noble incident in the poem, the follow-

ing lines, in which we see the angels heaving up the earth, and placing it in a different posture to the sun from what it had before the fall of man, are conceived with that sublime imagination which was so peculiar to the author:

> Some say he bid his angels turn askance
> The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more
> From the sun's axle; they with labour push'd
> Oblique the centric globe.———

We are in the second place to consider the infernal agents under the view which Milton has given us of them in this book. It is observed by those who would set forth the greatness of Virgil's plan, that he conducts his reader through all the parts of the earth which were discovered in his time. Asia, Africa, and Europe, are the several scenes of his fable. The plan of Milton's poem is of an infinitely greater extent, and fills the mind with many more astonishing circumstances. Satan, having surrounded the earth seven times, departs at length from Paradise. We then see him steering his course among the constellations; and, after having traversed the whole creation, pursuing his voyage through the chaos and entering into his own infernal dominions.

His first appearance in the assembly of fallen angels is worked up with circumstances which give a delightful surprise to the reader: but there is no incident in the whole poem which does this more than the transformation of the whole audience, that follows the account their leader gives them of his expedition. The gradual change of

Satan himself is described after Ovid's manner, and may vie with any of those celebrated transformations which are looked upon as the most beautiful parts in that poet's works. Milton never fails of improving his own hints, and bestowing the last finishing touches to every incident which is admitted into his poem. The unexpected hiss which arises in this episode, the dimensions and bulk of Satan, so much superior to those of the infernal spirits who lay under the same transformation, with the annual change which they are supposed to suffer, are instances of this kind. The beauty of the diction is very remarkable in this whole episode, as I have observed in the sixth paper of these my remarks on the great judgment with which it was contrived.

The parts of Adam and Eve, or the human persons, come next under our consideration. Milton's art is no where more shown, than in his conducting the parts of these our first parents. The representation he gives of them, without falsifying the story, is wonderfully contrived to influence the reader with pity and compassion towards them. Though Adam involves the whole species in misery, his crime proceeds from a weakness which every man is inclined to pardon and commiserate, as it seems rather the frailty of human nature, than of the person who offended. Every one is apt to excuse a fault which he himself might have fallen into. It was the excessive love for Eve that ruined Adam and his posterity, I need not add, that the author is justified in this particular by many of the fathers and the most orthodox writers. Milton had by this

means filled a great part of his poem with that kind of writing which the French critics call the *tendre*, and which is in a particular manner engaging to all sorts of readers.

Adam and Eve, in the book we are now considering, are likewise drawn with such sentiments as do not only interest the reader in their afflictions, but raise in him the most melting passions of humanity and commiseration. When Adam sees the several changes of nature produced about him, he appears in a disorder of mind suitable to one who had forfeited both his innocence and his happiness; he is filled with horror, remorse, despair; in the anguish of his heart, he expostulates with his Creator for having given him an unasked existence:

> Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
> To mould me man? Did I solicit thee
> From darkness to promote me? or here place
> In this delicious garden? As my will
> Concurr'd not to my being, 'twere but right
> And equal to reduce me to my dust,
> Desirous to resign, and render back
> All I receiv'd———

He immediately after recovers from his presumption, owns his doom to be just, and begs that the death which is threatened him may be inflicted on him:

> ———Why delays
> His hand to execute what his decree
> Fix'd on this day? Why do I over-live?
> Why am I mock'd with death, and lengthen'd out
> To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet
> Mortality my sentence, and be earth
> Insensible! how glad would lay me down,
> As in my mother's lap! There I should rest

And sleep secure: his dreadful voice no more
Would thunder in my ears: no fear of worse
To me, and to my offspring, would torment me
With cruel expectation———

This whole speech is full of the like emotion, and varied with all those sentiments which we may suppose natural to a mind so broken and disturbed. I must not omit that generous concern which our first father shows in it for his posterity, and which is so proper to affect the reader:

———Hide me from the face
Of God, whom to behold was then my height
Of happiness! yet well, if here would end
The misery: I deserved it, and would bear
My own deservings: but this will not serve:
All that I eat, or drink, or shall beget,
Is propagated curse. O voice once heard
Delightfully, "Increase and multiply:"
Now death to hear!———
In me all
Posterity stands curst! Fair patrimony,
That I must leave ye, sons! O were I able
To waste it all myself, and leave ye none!
So disinherited, how would ye bless
Me, now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind
For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemn'd,
If guiltless? But from me what can proceed
But all corrupt———

Who can afterward behold the father of mankind, extended upon the earth, uttering his midnight complaints, bewailing his existence, and wishing for death, without sympathizing with him in his distress!

Thus Adam to himself lamented loud
Through the still night; not now (as ere man fell)
Wholesome and cool, and mild, but with black air,
Accompanied with damps and dreadful gloom,
Which to his evil conscience represented

All things with double terror. On the ground
Outstretch'd he lay; on the cold ground! and oft
Curs'd his creation; Death as oft accus'd
Of tardy execution.

The part of Eve in this book is no less passionate, and apt to sway the reader in her favour. She is represented with great tenderness as approaching Adam, but is spurned from him with a spirit of upbraiding and indignation, conformable to the nature of man, whose passions had now gained the dominion over him. The following passage, wherein she is described as renewing her addresses to him, with the whole speech that follows it, have something in them exquisitely moving and pathetic:

He added not, and from her turn'd: but Eve
Not so repuls'd, with tears that ceas'd not flowing,
And tresses all disorder'd, at his feet
Fell humble; and embracing them besought
His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint:
"Forsake me not thus, Adam! Witness, Heav'n,
What love sincere, and rev'rence in my heart
I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
Unhappily deceiv'd! Thy suppliant
I beg, and clasp thy knees. Bereave me not,
(Whereon I live), thy gentle looks, thy aid,
Thy counsel in this uttermost distress,
My only strength and stay! Forlorn of thee,
Whither shall I betake me? where subsist?
While yet we live (scarce one short hour, perhaps,)
Between us two let there be peace," &c.

Adam's reconcilement to her is worked up in the same spirit of tenderness. Eve afterwards proposes to her husband, in the blindness of her despair, that, to prevent their guilt from descending upon posterity, they should resolve to live childless; or, if that could not be done, they should seek their own deaths by violent methods.

As those sentiments naturally engage the reader to regard the mother of mankind with more than ordinary commiseration, they likewise contain a very fine moral. The resolution of dying to end our miseries does not show such a degree of magnanimity as a resolution to bear them, and submit to the dispensations of Providence. Our author, has, therefore, with great delicacy, represented Eve as entertaining this thought, and Adam as disapproving it.

We are, in the next place, to consider the imaginary persons, or Death and Sin, who act a large part in this book. Such beautiful extended allegories are certainly some of the finest compositions of genius; but, as I have before observed, are not agreeable to the nature of an heroic poem. This of Sin and Death is very exquisite in its kind, if not considered as a part of such a work. The truths contained in it are so clear and open, that I shall not lose time in explaining them; but shall only observe, that a reader, who knows the strength of the English tongue, will be amazed to think how the poet could find such apt words and phrases to describe the actions of those two imaginary persons, and particularly in that part where death is exhibited as forming a bridge over the chaos; a work suitable to the genius of Milton.

Since the subject I am upon gives me an opportunity of speaking more at large of such shadowy and imaginary persons as may be introduced into heroic poems, I shall beg leave to explain myself in a matter which is curious in its kind, and which none of the critics have treated of. It is

certain Homer and Virgil are full of imaginary persons, who are very beautiful in poetry, when they are just shown without being engaged in any series of action. Homer indeed, represents Sleep as a person, and ascribes a short part to him in his Iliad; but we must consider, that though we now regard such a person as entirely shadowy and unsubstantial, the heathens made statues of him, placed him in their temples, and looked upon him as a real deity. When Homer makes use of other allegorical persons, it is only in short expressions, which convey an ordinary thought to the mind in the most pleasing manner; and may rather be looked upon as poetical phrases, than allegorical descriptions. Instead of telling us that men naturally fly when they are terrified, he introduces the persons of Flight and Fear, who, he tells us, are inseparable companions. Instead of saying that the time was come when Apollo ought to have received his recompense, he tells us, that the Hours brought him his reward. Instead of describing the effects which Minerva's ægis produced in battle, he tells us that the brims of it were encompassed by Terror, Rout, Discord, Fury, Pursuit, Massacre and Death. In the same figure of speaking, he represents Victory as following Diomedes; Discord as the mother of funerals and mourning; Venus as dressed by the Graces; Bellona as wearing Terror and Consternation like a garment. I might give several other instances out of Homer, as well as a great many out of Virgil. Milton has likewise very often made use of the same way of speaking, as where he tells us that Vic-

tory sat on the right hand of the Messiah, when he marched forth against the rebel angels; that at the rising of the sun, the Hours unbarred the gates of light; that discord was the daughter of Sin. Of the same nature are those expressions, where, describing the singing of the nightingale, he adds, "Silence was pleased;" and upon the Messiah's bidding peace to the chaos, "Confusion heard his voice." I might add innumerable instances of our poet's writing in this beautiful figure. It is plain that these I have mentioned, in which persons of an imaginary nature are introduced, are short allegories, as are not designed to be taken in the literal sense, but only to convey particular circumstances to the reader, after an unusual and entertaining manner. But when such persons are introduced as principal actors, and engaged in a series of adventures, they take too much upon them, and are by no means proper for an heroic poem, which ought to appear credible in its principal parts, I cannot forbear therefore thinking, that Sin and Death are as improper agents in a work of this nature, as Strength and Necessity in one of the tragedies of Æschylus, who represented those two persons nailing down Prometheus to a rock; for which he has been justly censured by the greatest critics. I do not know any imaginary person made use of in a more sublime manner of thinking than that in one of the prophets, who, describing God as descending from heaven, and visiting the sins of mankind, adds that dreadful circumstance, "Before him went the Pestilence." It is certain that this imaginary person might

have been described in all her purple spots. The Fever might have marched before her, Pain might have stood at her right hand, Frenzy on her left, and Death in her rear. She might have been introduced as gliding down from the tail of a comet, or darting upon the earth in a flash of lightning. She might have tainted the atmosphere with her breath. The very glaring of her eyes might have scattered infection. But I believe every reader will think, that in such sublime writings the mentioning of her, as it is done in Scripture, has something in it more just, as well as great, than all that the most fanciful poet could have bestowed upon her in the richness of his imagination.—L.

PAPER XVII.

——*Crudelis ubique*
Luctus ubique pavor, et plurima mortis imago.

VIRG. ÆN. II. 368.

All parts resound with tumults, plaints, and fears,
And grisly Death in sundry shapes appears.—DRYDEN.

MILTON has shown a wonderful art in describing that variety of passions which arose in our first parents upon the breach of the commandment that had been given them. We see them gradually passing from the triumph of their guilt, through remorse, shame, despair, contrition, prayer, and hope, to a perfect and complete repentance. At the end of the tenth book they are represented as prostrating themselves upon

the ground, and watering the earth with their tears: to which the poet joins this beautiful circumstance, that they offered up their penitential prayers on the very place where their judge appeared to them when he pronounced their sentence:

——————They forthwith to the place
Repairing where he judg'd them, prostrate fell
Before him rev'rent, and both confess'd
Humbly, their faults, and pardon begg'd with tears
Watering the ground———.

There is a beauty of the same kind in a tragedy of Sophocles, where Œdipus, after having put out his own eyes, instead of breaking his neck from the palace battlements (which furnishes so elegant an entertainment for our English audience), desires that he may be conducted to Mount Cythæron, in order to end his life in that very place where he was exposed in his infancy, and where he should then have died, had the will of his parents been executed.

As the author never fails to give a poetical turn to his sentiments, he describes in the beginning of this book the acceptance which these their prayers met with in a short allegory formed upon that beautiful passage in Holy Writ, "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne: and the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayer of the saints, ascended up before God."

——To heaven their prayers
Flew up, nor miss'd the way, by envious winds
Blown vagabond or frustrate; in they pass'd
Dimensionless through heavenly doors, then clad
With incense, where the golden altar fum'd
By their great Intercessor, came in sight
Before the Father's throne——.

We have the same thought expressed a second time in the intercession of the Messiah, which is conceived in very emphatical sentiments and expressions.

Among the poetical parts of Scripture, which Milton has so finely wrought into this part of his narration, I must not omit that wherein Ezekiel, speaking of the angels who appeared to him in a vision, adds, that every one had four faces, and that their whole bodies, and their hands, and their wings, were full of eyes round about:

——The cohort bright
Of watchful cherubim, four faces each
Had, like a double Janus, all their shape
Spangled with eyes——

The assembling of all the angels of heaven, to hear the solemn decree passed upon man, is represented in very lively ideas. The Almighty is here described as remembering mercy in the midst of judgment, and commanding Michael to deliver his message in the mildest terms, lest the spirit of man, which was already broken with the sense of his guilt and misery, should fail before him.

——Yet lest they faint
And the sad sentence rigorously urg'd,
For I behold them soften'd and with tears
Bewailing their excess, all terror hide.

The conference of Adam and Eve is full of

moving sentiments. Upon their going abroad, after the melancholy night which they had passed together, they discover the lion and the eagle, each of them pursuing his prey towards the eastern gates of Paradise. There is a double beauty in this incident, not only as it presents great and just omens, which are always agreeable in poetry, but as it expresses that enmity which was now produced in the animal creation. The poet, to show the like changes in nature, as well as to grace his fable with a noble prodigy, represents the sun in an eclipse This particular incident has likewise a fine effect upon the imagination of the reader, in regard to what follows; for at the same time that the sun is under an eclipse, a bright cloud descends in the western quarter of the heavens filled with a host of angels, and more luminous than the sun itself. The whole theatre of nature is darkened, that this glorious machine may appear with all its lustre and magnificence:

> —Why in the east
> Darkness ere day's mid-course? and morning light
> More orient in yon western cloud that draws
> O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,
> And slow descends with something heavenly fraught?
> He err'd not, for by this the heavenly bands
> Down from a sky of jasper lighted now,
> In Paradise, and on a hill made halt;
> A glorious apparition———

I need not observe how properly this author, who always suits his parts to the actors whom he introduces, has employed Michael in the expulsion of our first parents from Paradise. The archangel on this occasion neither appears in his

proper shape, nor in the familiar manner with which Raphael, the sociable spirit, entertained the father of mankind before the fall. His person, his port, and behaviour, are suitable to a spirit of the highest rank, and exquisitely described in the following passage:

———Th' archangel soon drew nigh,
Not in his shape celestial; but as man
Clad to meet man: over his lucid arms
A military vest of purple flow'd,
Livelier than Meliboean, or the grain
Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old,
In time of truce: Iris had dipt the woof:
His starry helm, unbuckl'd show'd him prime
In manhood where youth ended; by his side,
As in a glist'ring zodiac, hung the sword,
Satan's dire dread, and in his hand a spear.
Adam bow'd low; he kindly from his state
Inclin'd not, but his coming thus declared.

Eve's complaint, upon hearing that she was to be removed from the garden of Paradise, is wonderfully beautiful. The sentiments are not only proper to the subject, but have something in them particularly soft and womanish:

Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? Thus leave
Thee, native soil, these happy walks and shades,
Fit haunt of gods, where I had hope to spend
Quiet, though sad, the respite of that day
That must be mortal to us both? O flowers,
That never will in other climate grow,
My early visitation, and my last
At even, which I bred up with tender hand
From the first opening bud, and, and gave ye names!
Who now shall rear you to the sun, or rank
Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount?
Thee, lastly, nuptial bower, by me adorn'd
With what to sight or smell was sweet: from thee
How shall I part? and whither wander down
Into a lower world, to this, obscure
And wild? How shall we breathe in other air
Less pure, accustomed to immortal fruits?

Adam's speech abounds with thoughts which are equally moving, but of a more masculine and elevated turn. Nothing can be conceived more sublime and poetical than the following passage in it:

> This most afflicts me, that departing hence
> As from his face I shall be hid, deprived
> His blessed countenance; here I could frequent,
> With worship, place by place where he vouchsafed
> Presence divine; and to my sons relate,
> On this mount he appeared, under this tree
> Stood visible, among these pines his voice
> I heard; here with him at this fountain talked:
> So many grateful altars I would rear
> Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
> Of lustre from the brook, in memory
> Or monuments to ages, and thereon
> Offer sweet-smelling gums and fruits and flow'rs.
> In yonder nether world, where shall I seek
> His bright appearances, or footsteps trace;
> For though I fled him angry, yet recalled
> To life prolonged and promised race, I now
> Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts
> Of glory, and far off his steps adore.

The angel afterwards leads Adam to the highest mount of Paradise, and lays before him a whole hemisphere, as a proper stage for those visions which were to be represented on it. I have before observed how the plan of Milton's poem is, in many particulars, greater than that of the Iliad or Æneid. Virgil's hero, in the last of these poems is entertained with a sight of all those who are to descend from him; but though that episode is justly admired as one of the noblest designs in the whole Æneid, every one must allow that this of Milton is of a much higher nature. Adam's vision is not confined to any particular tribe of mankind, but extends to the whole species.

In this great review which Adam takes of all his sons and daughters, the first objects he is presented with exhibit to him the story of Cain and Abel, which is drawn together with much closeness and propriety of expression. The curiosity and natural horror which arises in Adam at the sight of the first dying man is touched with great beauty:

> But have I now seen death? Is this the way
> I must return to native dust? O sight
> Of terror foul, and ugly to behold!
> Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!

The second vision sets before him the image of death, in a great variety of appearance. The angel, to give him a general idea of those effects which his guilt had brought upon his posterity, places before him a large hospital, or lazar-house filled with persons lying under all kinds of mortal diseases. How finely has the poet told us that the sick persons languished under lingering and incurable distempers, by an apt and judicious use of such imaginary beings as those I mentioned in my last paper!

> Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair
> Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch;
> And over them triumphant Death his dart
> Shook, but delay'd to strike, tho' oft invok'd
> With vows, as their chief good and final hope.

The passion which likewise rises in Adam on this occasion is very natural.

> Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
> Dry-ey'd behold? Adam could not, but wept,
> Tho' not of woman born; compassion quell'd
> His best of man, and gave him up to tears.

The discourse, between the angel and Adam which follows, abounds with noble morals.

As there is nothing more delightful in poetry than a contrast and opposition of incidents, the author, after this melancholy prospect of death and sickness, raises up a scene of mirth, love, and jollity. The secret pleasure that steals into Adam's heart, as he is intent upon this vision, is imagined with great delicacy. I must not omit the description of the loose female troop, who seduced the sons of God, as they are called in Scripture.

> For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd
> Of goddesses, so blythe, so smooth, so gay,
> Yet empty of all good, wherein consists
> Woman's domestic honour, and chief praise;
> Bred only and completed to the taste
> Of lustful appetence, to sing, to dance,
> To dress, and trol the tongue, and roll the eye.
> To these that sober race of men, whose lives
> Religious titled them the sons of God,
> Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame,
> Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles
> Of these fair atheists.———

The next vision is of a quite contrary nature, and filled with the horrors of war. Adam at the sight of it melts into tears, and breaks out into that passionate speech.

> ———O what are these!
> Death's ministers, not men, who thus deal death
> Inhumanly to men, and multiply
> Ten thousandfold the sin of him who slew
> His brother; for of whom such massacre
> Make they, but of their brethren, men of men?

Milton to keep up an agreeable variety in his visions, after having raised in the mind of his

reader the several ideas of terror which are conformable to the description of war, passes on to those softer images of triumphs and festivals, in that vision of lewdness and luxury which ushers in the flood.

As it is visible that the poet had his eye upon Ovid's account of the universal deluge, the reader may observe with how much judgment he has avoided every thing that is redundant or puerile in the Latin poet. We do not here see the wolf swimming among the sheep, nor any of those wanton imaginations which Seneca found fault with, as unbecoming this great catastrophe of nature. If our poet has imitated that verse in which Ovid tells us that there was nothing but sea, and that this sea had no shore to it, he has not set the thought in such a light as to incur the censure which critics have passed upon it. The latter part of that verse in Ovid is idle and superfluous, but just and beautiful in Milton.

Jamque mare et tellûs nullum discrimen habebant;
Nil nisi pontus erat; deerant quoque littora ponto.
OVID, METAM. I. 291.

Now seas and earth were in confusion lost;
A world of waters, and without a coast.—DRYDEN

——————Sea cover'd sea,
Sea without shore——————MILTON.

In Milton the former part of the description does not forestal the latter. How much more great and solemn on this occasion is that which follows in our English poet.

——————And in their palaces,
Where luxury late reign'd, sea-monsters whelp'd
And stabled——————

than that in Ovid, where we are told that the seacalf lay in those places where the goats were used to browse! The reader may find several other parallel passages in the Latin and English description of the deluge, wherein our poet has visibly the advantage. The sky's being overcharged with clouds, the descending of the rains, the rising of the seas, and the appearance of the rainbow, are such descriptions as every one must take notice of. The circumstance relating to Paradise is so finely imagined, and suitable to the opinions of many learned authors, that I cannot forbear giving it a place in this paper.

> ——Then shall this mount
> Of Paradise, by might of waves, be mov'd
> Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood;
> With all his verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift
> Down the great river to th' op[illegible] gulf,
> And there take root: an island salt and bare,
> The haunt of seals and orcs and sea-mews' clang

The transition which the poet makes from the vision of the deluge, to the concern it occasioned in Adam, is exquisitely graceful, copied after Virgil, though the first thought it introduces is rather in the spirit of Ovid:

> How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
> The end of all thy offsprings end so sad,
> Depopulation! Thee another flood,
> Of tears and sorrow, a flood, thee also drown'd,
> And sunk thee as thy sons; till gently rear'd
> By th' angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
> Tho' comfortless, as when a father mourns
> His children, all in view destroy'd at once.

I have been the more particular in my quotations out of the eleventh book of Paradise Lost,

because it is not generally reckoned among the most shining books of this poem; for which reason the reader might be apt to overlook those many passages in it which deserve our admiration. The eleventh and twelfth are indeed built upon that single circumstance of the removal of our first parents from Paradise; but though this is not in itself so great a subject as that in most of the foregoing books, it is extended and diversified with so many surprising incidents and pleasing episodes, that these two last books can by no means be looked upon as unequal parts of this divine poem. I must further add, that had not Milton represented our first parents as driven out of Paradise, his fall of man would not have been complete, and consequently his action would have been imperfect.—L.

PAPER XVIII.

Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures,
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus—

HOR. ARS. POET. 180.

What we hear moves less than what we see.—ROSCOMMON.

MILTON, after having represented in vision the history of mankind to the first great period of nature, despatches the remaining part of it in narration. He has devised a very handsome reason for the angel's proceeding with Adam after this manner; though doubtless the true reason was the difficulty which the poet would have found to have shadowed out so mixed and

complicated a story in visible objects. I could wish, however, that the author had done it, whatever pains it might have cost him. To give my opinion freely, I think that the exhibiting part of the history of mankind in vision, and part in narrative, is as if an history-painter should put in colours one half of his subject, and write down the remaining part of it. If Milton's poem flags any where, it is in this narration, where in some places the author has been so attentive to his divinity that he has neglected his poetry. The narration, however, rises very happily on several occasions, where the subject is capable of poetical ornaments, as particularly in the confusion which he describes among the builders of Babel, and in his short sketch of the plagues of Egypt. The storm of hail and fire, with the darkness that overspread the land for three days, are described with great strength. The beautiful passage which follows is raised upon noble hints in Scripture.

> ———Thus with ten wounds,
> The river dragon, tam'd, at length submits
> To let his sojourners depart, and oft
> Humbles his stubborn heart, but still as ice
> More hardn'd after thaw, till in his rage
> Pursuing whom he late dismiss'd, the sea
> Swallows him with his host, but them lets pass
> As on dry land between two crystal walls,
> Aw'd by the rod of Moses so to stand
> Divided———

The river-dragon is an allusion to the crocodile, which inhabits the Nile, from whence Egypt derives her plenty. This allusion is taken from that sublime passage in Ezekiel: "Thus saith

the Lord God, Behold I am against thee, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself." Milton has given us another very noble and poetical image in the same description, which is copied almost word for word out of the history of Moses:

> All night he will pursue, but his approach
> Darkness defends between till morning watch.
> Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud
> God looking forth will trouble all his host,
> And craze their chariot wheels: when, by command,
> Moses once more his potent rod extends
> Over the sea: the sea his rod obeys:
> On their embattell'd ranks the waves return,
> And overwhelm their war———

As the principal design of this episode was to give Adam an idea of the holy person who was to reinstate human nature in that happiness and perfection from which it had fallen, the poet confines himself to the line of Abraham, from whence the Messiah was to descend. The angel is described as seeing the patriarch actually travelling towards the land of promise, which gives a particular liveliness to this part of the narration:

> I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith
> He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil,
> Ur of Chaldea, passing now the ford
> To Haran; after him a cumbrous train
> Of herds, and flocks, and numerous servitude;
> Not wand'ring poor, but trusting all his wealth
> With God, who call'd him in a land unknown.
> Canaan he now attains; I see his tents
> Pitch'd about Schechem, and the neighbouring plain
> Of Moreh; there by promise he receives
> Gift to his progeny of all that land;
> From Hamath northward to the desert south:
> (Things by their names I call, though yet unnam'd.)

As Virgil's vision in the sixth Æneid probably gave Milton the hint of this episode, the last line is a translation of that verse where Anchises mentions the names of places, which they were to bear hereafter:

Hæctum nomina erunt, nunc sunt sine nomine terra.

The poet has very finely represented the joy and gladness of heart which rise in Adam upon his discovery of the Messiah. As he sees his day at a distance through types and shadows, he rejoices in it: but when he finds the redemption of man completed, and Paradise again renewed, he breaks forth in rapture and transport:

"O goodness infinite, goodness immense!
That all this good of evil shall produce." &c.

I have hinted in my sixth paper on Milton, that an heroic poem, according to the opinion of the best critics, ought to end happily, and leave the mind of the reader, after having conducted it through many doubts and fears, sorrows and disquietudes, in a state of tranquillity and satisfaction. Milton's fable, which had so many other qualifications to recommend it, was deficient in this particular. It is here therefore that the poet has shown a most exquisite judgment, as well as the finest invention, by finding out a method to supply this natural defect in his subject. Accordingly he leaves the adversary of mankind, in the last view which he gives us of him, under the lowest state of mortification and disappointment. We see him chewing ashes, grovelling in the dust, and loaded with supernumerary pains

and torments. On the contrary, our two first parents are comforted by dreams and visions, cheered with promises of salvation, and in a manner raised to a greater happiness than that which they had forfeited. In short, Satan is represented miserable in the height of his triumphs, and Adam triumphant in the height of misery.

Milton's poem ends very nobly. The last speeches of Adam and the archangel are full of moral and instructive sentiments. The sleep that fell upon Eve, and the effects it had in quieting the disorders of her mind, produces the same kind of consolation in the reader, who cannot peruse the last beautiful speech which is ascribed to the mother of mankind, without a secret pleasure and satisfaction:

> Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know?
> For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise,
> Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
> Presaging, since, with sorrow and heart's distress
> Wearied, I fell asleep; but now led on;
> In me is no delay: with thee to go,
> Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
> Is to go hence unwilling: thou to me
> Art all things under heav'n, all places thou,
> Who for my wilful crime art banish'd hence
> This farther consolation yet secure
> I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
> Such favour I unworthy am vouchsaf'd,
> By me the promis'd seed shall all restore.

The following lines, which conclude the poem, rise in a most glorious blaze of poetical images and expressions.

Heliodorus in his Æthiopics acquaints us that the motion of the gods differs from that of mortals, as the former do not stir their feet, nor proceed step by step, but slide over the surface

of the earth by a uniform swimming of the whole body. The reader may observe with how poetical a description Milton has attributed the same kind of motion to the angels who were to take possession of Paradise:

> So spake our mother Eve; and Adam heard
> Well pleas'd, but answer'd not; for now too nigh
> Th' archangel stood; and from the other hill
> To their fix'd station, all in bright array
> The cherubim descended; on the ground
> Gliding meteorous, as evening mist
> Ris'n from a river, o'er the marish glides,
> And gathers ground fast at the lab'rers heel
> Homeward returning. High in front advanc'd,
> The brandish'd sword of God before them blaz'd
> Fierce as a comet——

The author helped his invention in the following passage, by reflecting on the behaviour of the angel who in Holy Writ has the conduct of Lot and his family. The circumstances drawn from that relation are very gracefully made use of on this occasion:

> In either hand the hast'ning angel caught
> Our ling'ring parents, and to the eastern gate
> Led them direct; and down the cliff as fast
> To the subjected plain; then disappear'd,
> They looking back, &c.

The scene which our first parents are surprised with, upon their looking back on Paradise, wonderfully strikes the reader's imagination, as nothing can be more natural than the tears they shed on that occasion:

> They, looking back, all th' eastern side beheld
> Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
> Wav'd over by that flaming brand, the gate
> With dreadful faces throng'd and fiery arms:

Some natural tears they dropp'd, but wip'd them soon:
The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.

If I might presume to offer at the smallest alteration in this divine work, I should think the poem would end better with the passage here quoted, than the two verses which follow:

They hand in hand, with wand'ring steps and slow
Through Eden took their solitary way

These two verses, though they have their beauty, fall very much below the foregoing passage, and renew in the mind of the reader that anguish which was pretty well laid by that consideration:

The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.

The number of books in Paradise Lost is equal to those of the Æneid. Our author in his first edition had divided his poem into ten books; but afterward broke the seventh and the eleventh each of them into two different books, by the help of some small additions. This second division was made with great judgment, as any one may see who will be at the pains of examining it. It was not done for the sake of such a chimerical beauty as that of resembling Virgil in this particular, but for the more just and regular disposition of this great work.

Those who have read Bossu, and many of the critics who have written since his time, will not pardon me if I do not find out the particular moral which is inculcated in Paradise Lost.

Though I can by no means think, with the last-mentioned French author, that an epic writer first of all pitches upon a certain moral, as the ground-work and foundation of his poem, and afterward finds out a story to it; I am however of opinion, that no just heroic poem ever was or can be made, from whence one great moral may not be deduced. That which reigns in Milton is the most universal and most useful that can be imagined. It is in short this, that obedience to the will of God makes men happy, and that disobedience makes them miserable. This is visibly the moral of the principal fable, which turns upon Adam and Eve, who continued in Paradise while they kept the command that was given them, and were driven out of it as soon as they had transgressed. This is likewise the moral of the principal episode, which shows us how an innumerable multitude of angels fell from their state of bliss, and were cast into hell upon their disobedience. Besides this great moral, which may be looked upon as the soul of the fable, there are an infinity of under morals which are to be drawn from several parts of the poem, and which make this work more useful and instructive than any other poem in any language.

Those who have criticized on the Odyssey, the Iliad, and Æneid, have taken a great deal of pains to fix the number of months or days contained in the action of each of those poems. If any one thinks it worth his while to examine this particular in Milton, he will find, that from Adam's first appearance in the fourth book to his expulsion from Paradise in the twelfth, the author

reckons ten days. As for that part of the action which is described in the three first books, as it does not pass within the regions of nature, I have before observed that it is not subject to any calculations of time.

I have now finished my observations on a work which does an honour to the English nation. I have taken a general view of it under these four heads—the fable, the characters, the sentiments, and the language, and made each of them the subject of a particular paper. I have in the next place spoken of the censures which our author may incur under each of these heads, which I have confined to two papers, though I might have enlarged the number if I had been disposed to dwell on so ungrateful a subject; I believe, however, that the severest reader will not find any little fault in heroic poetry, which this author has fallen into, that does not come under one of those heads among which I have distributed his several blemishes. After having thus treated at large of Paradise Lost, I could not think it sufficient to have celebrated this poem in the whole without descending to particulars. I have therefore bestowed a paper upon each book, and endeavoured not only to prove that the poem is beautiful in general, but to point out its particular beauties; and to determine wherein they consist. I have endeavoured to show some passages are beautiful by being sublime, others by being soft, others by being natural; which of them are recommended by the passion, which by the moral, which by the sentiment, and which by the expression. I have

likewise endeavoured to show how the genius of the poet shines by a happy invention, a distant allusion, or a judicious imitation; how he has copied or improved upon Homer or Virgil, and raised his own imaginations by the use which he has made of several poetical passages in Scripture. I might have inserted also several passages in Tasso, which our author has imitated: but, as I do not look upon Tasso to be a sufficient voucher, I would not perplex my reader with such quotations as might do more honour to the Italian than to the English poet. In short, I have endeavoured to particularize those innumerable kinds of beauty which it would be tedious to recapitulate, but which are essential to poetry, and which may be met with in the works of this great author.—L.

SPECTATOR.

THE TRAVELLER;

OR, A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY.

REMOTE, unfriended, melancholy, slow,
Or by the lazy Scheld, or wandering Po;
Or onward, where the rude Carinthian boor
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door;
Or where Campania's plain forsaken lies,
A weary waste expanding to the skies!
Where 'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee:
Still to my Brother turns, with ceaseless pain,
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain.

Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend!
Blest be that spot, where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire!
Blest that abode, where want and pain repair,
And every stranger finds a ready chair!
Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crown'd,
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale;
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good!

But me, not destined such delights to share,
My prime of life in wandering spent and care,
Impell'd with steps unceasing, to pursue
Some fleeting good, that mocks me with the view;
That, like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet, as I follow, flies;
My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And find no spot of all the world my own.

Even now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend;
And, placed on high above the storm's career,
Look downward where a hundred realms appear;
Lakes, forests, cities, plains, extending wide,
The pomp of kings, the shepherd's humbler pride.
When thus Creation's charms around combine,
Amidst the store should thankless pride repine?
Say, should the philosophic mind disdain
That good which makes each humbler bosom vain?
Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,
These little things are great to little man;
And wiser he, whose sympathetic mind
Exults in all the good of all mankind.
Ye glittering towns, with wealth and splendour crown'd;
Ye fields, where summer spreads profusion round;
Ye lakes, whose vessels catch the busy gale;
Ye bending swains, that dress the flowery vale;
For me your tributary stores combine,
Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine!
As some lone miser, visiting his store
Bends at his treasure, counts, recounts it o'er;
Hoards after hoards his rising raptures fill,
Yet still he sighs, for hoards are wanting still:
Thus to my breast alternate passions rise,
Pleased with each good that Heaven to man supplies:
Yet oft a sigh prevails, and sorrows fall,
To see the hoard of human bliss so small;
And oft I wish, amidst the scene, to find
Some spot to real happiness consign'd,
Where my worn soul, each wandering hope at rest,
May gather bliss to see my fellows blest.
But where to find that happiest spot below,
Who can direct, when all pretend to know?
The shuddering tenant of the frigid zone
Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own.

Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
And his long nights of revelry and ease!
The naked negro, panting at the line,
Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine,
Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
And thanks his gods for all the good they gave.
Such is the patriot's boast where'er we roam,
His first best country ever is at home.
And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare,
And estimate the blessings which they share,
Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find
An equal portion dealt to all mankind;
As different good, by art or nature given,
To different nations, makes their blessings even.
Nature, a mother kind alike to all,
Still grants her bliss at labour's earnest call,
With food as well the peasant is supplied,
On Idra's cliffs as Arno's shelvy side;
And though the rocky-crested summits frown,
These rocks, by custom, turn to beds of down.
From art more various are the blessings sent,
Wealth, commerce, honour, liberty, content,
Yet these each other's power so strong contest,
That either seems destructive of the rest.
Where wealth and freedom reign, contentment fails,
And honour sinks where commerce long prevails.
Hence every state to one loved blessing prone,
Conforms and models life to that alone,
Each to the fav'rite happiness attends,
And spurns the plan that aims at other ends,
Till, carried to excess in each domain,
This fav'rite good begets peculiar pain.

But let us try these truths with closer eyes,
And trace them through the prospect as it lies,
Here for a while, my proper cares resign'd,
Here let me sit in sorrow for mankind,

Like yon neglected shrub, at random cast,
That shades the steep, and sighs at every blast.
Far to the right, where Apennine ascends,
Bright as the summer, Italy extends
Its uplands sloping deck the mountain's side,
Woods over woods in gay theatric pride;
While oft some temple's mouldering tops between
With venerable grandeur mark the scene.

Could nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest.
Whatever fruits in different climes are found,
That proudly rise, or humbly court the ground,
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,
Whose bright succession decks the varied year;
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky
With vernal lives, that blossom but to die;
These here disporting, own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil,
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand,
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

But small the bliss that sense alone bestows,
And sensual bliss is all the nation knows,
In florid beauty groves and fields appear,
Man seems the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults through all his manners reign;
Though poor, luxurious; though submissive, vain;
Though grave, yet trifling; zealous, yet untrue;
And e'en in penance planning sins anew.
All evils here contaminate the mind,
That opulence departed leaves behind.
For wealth was theirs, nor far removed the date.
When commerce proudly flourished through the state:
At her command the palace learn'd to rise,
Again the long-fall'n column sought the skies;
The canvass glow'd, beyond e'en Nature warm,
The pregnant quarry teem'd with human form;

Till, more unsteady than the southern gale,
Commerce on other shores display'd her sail;
While nought remain'd of all that riches gave,
But towns unman'd, and lords without a slave;
And late the nation found, with fruitless skill,
Its former strength was but plethoric ill.

Yet, still the loss of wealth is here supplied,
By arts, the splendid wrecks of former pride:
From these the feeble heart and long-fall'n mind
An easy compensation seem to find.
Here may be seen, in bloodless pomp array'd,
The paste-board triumph and the cavalcade;
Processions form'd for piety and love,
A mistress or a saint in every grove.
By sports like these are all their cares beguiled,
The sports of children satisfy the child;
Each nobler aim, repress'd by long control,
Now sinks at last, or feebly mans the soul:
While low delights succeeding fast behind,
In happier meanness occupy the mind:
As in those domes, where Cæsars once bore sway,
Defaced by time, and tott'ring in decay,
There in the ruin, heedless of the dead,
The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed;
And, wond'ring man could want the larger pile,
Exults, and owns his cottage with a smile.

My soul, turn from them! turn we to survey
Where rougher climes a nobler race display,
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansions tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread:
No product there the barren hills afford,
But man and steel, the soldier and his sword.
No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,
But winter ling'ring chills the lap of May;
No zephyr fondly sues the mountain's breast,
But meteors glare, and stormy glooms invest.

Yet still, even here, content can spread a charm,
Redress the clime, and all its rage disarm.
Though poor the peasant's hut, his feasts though small,
He sees his little lot the lot of all;
Sees no contiguous palace rear its head,
To shame the meanness of his humble shed;
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal,
To make him loathe his vegetable meal;
But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,
Each wish contracting, fits him to the soil.
Cheerful at morn, he wakes from short repose,
Breathes the keen air, and carols as he goes;
With patient angle trolls the finny deep,
Or drives his vent'rous ploughshare to the steep;
Or seeks the den where snow-tracks mark the way,
And drags the struggling savage into day.
At night returning, every labour sped,
He sits him down the monarch of a shed;
Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys
His children's looks, that brighten at the blaze;
While his loved partner, boastful of her hoard,
Displays her cleanly platter on the board;
And haply too some pilgrim thither led.
With many a tale repays the nightly bed.

Thus every good his native wilds impart,
Imprints the patriot passion on his heart;
And e'en those hills, that round his mansion rise,
Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.
Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms;
And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
Clings close and closer to the mother's breast,
So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
But bind him to his native mountains more.

Such are the charms to barren states assign'd;
Their wants but few, their wishes all confin'd;

Yet let them only share the praises due,
If few their wants, their pleasures are but few;
For every want that stimulates the breast,
Becomes a source of pleasure when redress'd.
Hence from such lands each pleasing science flies,
That first excites desire and then supplies.
Unknown to them when sensual pleasures cloy,
To fill the languid pause with finer joy;
Unknown those powers that raise the soul to flame,
Catch every nerve, and vibrate through the frame:
Their level life is but a smould'ring fire,
Unquench'd by want, unfann'd by strong desire;
Unfit for raptures, or, if raptures cheer
On some high festival of once a-year,
In wild excess the vulgar breast takes fire,
Till, buried in debauch, the bliss expire.

But not their joys alone thus coarsely flow;
Their morals, like their pleasures, are but low;
For, as refinement stops, from sire to son,
Unalter'd unimproved, the manners run;
And love's and friendship's finely-pointed dart
Fall blunted from each indurated heart.
Some sterner virtues o'er the mountain's breast
May sit like falcons cowering o'er the nest;
But all the gentler morals, such as play
Through life's more cultured walks, and charm the way!
These, far dispersed on timorous pinions fly,
To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.

To kinder skies, where gentler manners reign,
I turn; and France displays her bright domain;
Gay, sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleased with thyself, whom all the world can please,
How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe, beside the murm'ring Loire!
Where shading elms along the margin grew,
And, freshen'd from the wave, the zephyr flew;

And happily, though my harsh touch, falt'ring still
But mock'd all tune, and marr'd the dancer's skill;
Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,
And dance, forgetful of the noontide hour.
Alike all ages. Dames of ancient days
Have led their children through the mirthful maze;
And the gay grandsire, skill'd in gestic lore,
Has frisk'd beneath the burden of threescore.
So bless'd a life these thoughtless realms display,
Thus idly busy rolls their world away:
Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear,
For honour forms the social temper here:
Honour, that praise which real merit gains,
Or even imaginary worth obtains,
Here passes current; paid from hand to hand
It shifts, in splendid traffic, round the land:
From courts to camps, to cottages it strays,
And all are taught an avarice of praise:
They please, are pleased, they give to get esteem,
Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.
But, while this softer art their bliss supplies,
It gives their follies also room to rise;
For praise, too dearly loved or warmly sought,
Enfeebles all internal strength of thought;
And the weak soul, within itself unblest,
Leans for all pleasure on another's breast.
Hence ostentation here, with tawdry art,
Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart;
Here vanity assumes her pert grimace,
And trims her robes of frieze with copper lace;
Here beggar pride defrauds her daily cheer,
To boast one splendid banquet once a-year;
The mind still turns where shifting fashion draws,
Nor weighs the solid worth of self-applause.
To men of other minds my fancy flies,
Embosom'd in the deep where Holland lies.

Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
Where the broad ocean leans against the land,
And, sedulous to stop the coming tide,
Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride.
Onwards, methinks, and diligently slow,
The firm connected bulwark seems to grow,
Spreads its long arms amidst the wat'ry roar,
Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore;
While the pent ocean, rising o'er the pile,
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile;
The slow canal, the yellow-blossom'd vale,
The willow-tufted bank, the gliding sail,
The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,
A new creation rescued from his reign.
Thus, while around the wave-subjected soil
Impels the native to repeated toil,
Industrious habits in each bosom reign,
And industry begets a love of gain.
Hence all the good from opulence that springs,
With all those ills superfluous treasure brings,
Are here display'd. Their much loved wealth imparts
Convenience, plenty, elegance, and arts;
But view them closer, craft and fraud appear;
Even liberty itself is barter'd here.
At gold's superior charms all freedom flies,
The needy sell it, and the rich man buys;
A land of tyrants, and a den of slaves,
Here wretches seek dishonourable graves;
And calmly bent, to servitude conform,
Dull as their lakes that slumber in the storm.
Heavens! how unlike their Belgic sires of old!
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold;
War in each breast, and freedom on each brow;
How much unlike the sons of Britain now!
Fired at the sound, my genius spreads her wing,
And flies where Britain courts the western spring;

Where lawns extend that scorn Arcadian pride,
And brighter streams than famed Hydaspes glide.
There all around the gentlest breezes stray,
There gentle music melts on every spray;
Creation's mildest charms are there combined,
Extremes are only in the master's mind.
Stern o'er each bosom Reason holds her state,
With daring aims irregularly great.
Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
I see the lords of human kind pass by;
Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
By forms unfashion'd, fresh from Nature's hand,
Fierce in their native hardiness of soul,
True to imagined right, above control;
While even the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man.
Thine, Freedom, thine the blessings pictured here,
Thine are those charms that dazzle and endear;
Too blest indeed were such without alloy,
But fostered even by Freedom, ills annoy:
That independence Britons prize too high,
Keeps man from man, and breaks the social tie;
The self-dependent lordlings stand alone,
All claims that bind and sweeten life unknown,
Here by the bonds of nature feebly held,
Minds combat minds, repelling and repell'd.
Ferments arise; imprison'd factions roar,
Repress'd ambition struggles round her shore;
Till, over-wrought, the general system feels
Its motions stop, or frenzy fire the wheels.
Nor this the worst. As Nature's ties decay,
As duty, love, and honour fail to sway,
Fictitious bonds, the bonds of wealth and law,
Still gather strength, and force unwilling awe.
Hence all obedience bows to these alone,
And talent sinks, and merit weeps unknown;

Till time may come, when stripp'd of all her charms,
The land of scholars, and the nurse of arms,
Where noble stems transmit the patriot flame,
Where kings have toil'd, and poets wrote for fame,
One sink of level avarice shall lie,
And scholars, soldiers, kings unhonour'd die.

Yet think not, thus when Freedom's ills I state,
I mean to flatter kings, or court the great;
Ye powers of truth, that bid my soul aspire,
Far from my bosom drive the low desire!
And thou, fair Freedom, taught alike to feel
The rabble's rage and tyrant's angry steel;
Thou transitory flower, alike undone
By proud contempt, or favour's fost'ring sun,
Still may thy blooms the changeful clime endure,
I only would repress them to secure;
For just experience tells, in every soil,
That those who think must govern those who toil,
And all that freedom's highest aims can reach,
Is but to lay proportion'd loads on each:
Hence, should one order disproportion'd grow,
Its double weight must ruin all below.

O then how blind to all that truth requires,
Who think it freedom when a part aspires!
Calm is my soul, nor apt to rise in arms,
Except when fast approaching danger warms:
But when contending chiefs blockade the throne,
Contracting regal power to stretch their own,
When I behold a factious band agree
To call it freedom when themselves are free;
Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw,
Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law;
The wealth of climes, where savage nations roam,
Pillaged from slaves to purchase slaves at home;
Fear, pity, justice, indignation start,
Tear off reserve, and bare my swelling heart;

Till, half a patriot, half a coward grown,
I fly from petty tyrants to the throne.
Yes, brother, curse with me that baleful hour,
When first ambition struck at regal power;
And thus polluting honour in its source,
Gave wealth to sway the mind with double force.
Have we not seen, round Britain's peopled shore,
Her useful sons exchanged for useless ore?
Seen all her triumphs but destruction haste,
Like flaring tapers, bright'ning as they waste;
Seen opulence, her grandeur to maintain,
Lead stern depopulation in her train,
And over fields, where scatter'd hamlets rose,
In barren, solitary pomp repose?
Have we not seen, at pleasure's lordly call,
The smiling long-frequented village fall?
Beheld the duteous son, the sire decay'd,
The modest matron, and the blushing maid,
Forced from their homes, a melancholy train,
To traverse climes beyond the western main,
Where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around,
And Niagara stuns with thund'ring sound?
E'en now, perhaps, as there some pilgrim strays
Through tangled forests, and through dangerous ways
Where beasts with man divided empire claim,
And the brown Indian marks with murd'rous aim;
There, while above the giddy tempest flies,
And all around distressful yells arise,
The pensive exile bending with his wo,
To stop too fearful, and too faint to go,
Casts a long look where England's glories shine,
And bids his bosom sympathize with mine.
Vain, very vain, my weary search to find
That bliss which only centres in the mind:
Why have I strayed from pleasure and repose,
To seek a good each government bestows?

In every government though terrors reign,
Though tyrant kings, or tyrant laws restrain,
How small of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure!
Still to ourselves in every place consigned,
Our own felicity we make or find:
With secret course, which no loud storms annoy,
Glides the smooth current of domestic joy.
The lifted axe, the agonizing wheel,
Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed of steel,
To men remote from power but rarely known,
Leave reason, faith, and conscience, all our own.

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